

BR 280 .B5 1957
Blayney, Ida Walz.
The age of Luther



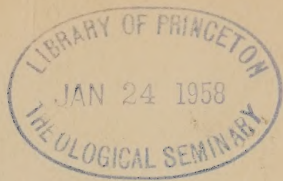
(Courtesy of Macmillan and Company, London)

The Crucifixion. Painting by Albrecht Dürer.



(Courtesy of National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection)

Christ in Gethsemane. Woodcut by Albrecht Dürer.



The Age of Luther

The Spirit of
RENAISSANCE—HUMANISM
and the
REFORMATION



by
Ida Walz Blayney, Ph.D

VANTAGE PRESS • NEW YORK
WASHINGTON • HOLLYWOOD • TORONTO

To
MY HUSBAND
LINDSEY BLAYNEY, PH.D., LL.D.
DEAN EMERITUS OF CARLETON COLLEGE
IN
GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF WISE COUNSEL
AND
INSPIRING CONFIDENCE

FIRST EDITION

*All rights reserved, including the right of
reproduction in whole or in part in any form*
Copyright, 1957, by Ida Walz Blayney
Published by Vantage Press, Inc.
120 West 31st Street, New York 1, N. Y.
Manufactured in the United States of America
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 56-12321

FOREWORD

The sixteenth century is one of the outstanding moments in the history of mankind. In this century, in the age of Luther, man was set free in heart and mind, in conscience, judgment, and intelligence. This spiritual and intellectual emancipation was climaxed in two revolutionary movements, the Renaissance and the Reformation, both so powerful, that with them the modern era was born. The incentive to this book has been the desire to contribute in some measure to a clearer understanding of the releasing energy active in effecting modern man's emergence from bondage to the Middle Ages.

By examination of the intellectual and spiritual forces at work in this century, this book describes the part played by Europe in general, by Germany in particular, in the deliverance of the human spirit. A general survey of the age in Europe provides the background for orienting the momentous agitations and movements astir in it, and for analysis of its great personalities.

In the first part of the volume the essential characteristic of the revival of letters and art known as the Renaissance, and its offspring, Humanism, are reviewed. The study of eminent representatives in art, literature, philosophy, and science considers their individual approach to God and man, and thereby brings into focus the humanistic *Weltanschauung* of each. Thus the meaning of the intentions and goals proclaimed by Renaissance and Humanism is made clear: the emancipation of man as a *human, rational being*.

The second and larger part of this book is devoted to the Protestant interpretation of Christian theology, to the principles underlying the religious revolution called the Reformation. This latter movement in its turn proclaims the emancipation of man as a *spiritual being*. It is the major objective of this research to concentrate upon the struggle for the freedom of the Christian, to examine the new concept of God and His relation to man as experienced by the founder of Evangelical Christianity — Martin Luther. In order that the humanistic as well as the Evangelical definition of

the meaning and purpose of life be clearly delineated and made more readily distinguishable, Luther's explication of the significance of Christian doctrine is, where clearly relevant, compared with that supported by Scholasticism, humanistic in inception and by adaptation of ancient philosophy.

Impressed by the inexhaustible, intellectual, and spiritual wealth of this prolific century, and especially by the dominating and clarifying position Luther assumed amid the conflicting forces at work in his age, the author felt in ever-increasing measure the need for a text in the English language which would reveal authentically, with translations of quotations made directly from the original editions of his works, the legacy of his greatness. Biographical material has been reduced to a minimum. It is the greatness in the great that calls for review.

The study of Luther's greatness emphasizes his rediscovery of God's direct relation to man and man's direct relation to God; it unmask the elemental starkness of man's helplessness when confronted by God in His holiness, and proclaims His unbounded grace. Luther's genius fosters a reborn, renewed faith in God and in man, and sets forth that life has purpose and meaning in so far as it is lived in inwardness of spirit. Faith in God, hidden and revealed, makes free. Faith in the Unseen transmutes the world of the seen. And the one thing needful to mankind is a consciousness of the fact that in this world the power of evil is by far outweighed by the presence and reality of the good.

The age of Luther, in which currents and counter-currents, spiritual, intellectual, creative meet, merge, and part to flow again in a new stream into our modern centuries, brings hope to our age so complex and distraught. It reiterates that each day of man's life presses for a renaissance of learning and a wider understanding, for a reaffirmation of religious faith. It accentuates the urgent need of a rebirth of respect for, and trust in those higher stirrings of heart and mind, upon which, in last analysis, the confident expectations and ultimate destiny of mankind must depend.

The expression of my sincere appreciation is due to President Laurence M. Gould of Carleton College, to Professor Reginald D. Lang, Chairman of the Department of International Relations, and to Professor William Hammer, Chairman of the Department of German, for their careful reading of the material of this book in its early preparation, and for their continued encouragement. To

Professor John G. Kunstmann of the University of Chicago, now Chairman of the Department of Germanic Languages of the University of North Carolina, I owe sincere thanks for critical reading of the manuscript and for his generous approval. I am greatly indebted to the Librarian and Staff of St. Olaf College for the loan of the earlier editions of Luther's complete works, and for granting me private desk space for the use of the Weimer edition. I am further under obligation to the Librarian and Staff of the Carleton College Library for their cooperation in securing for me many reference works, some with great difficulty, for which kindness I am happy to make public acknowledgment. And finally, I have endeavored to express my deep and abiding gratitude to my husband by the dedication of this volume to him.

Carleton College

I. W. B.

*Der Glaube fordert
frei Ergeben und fröhlich Wagen,
fröhliche Zuversicht auf Gottes Güte.*

LUTHER

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

RENAISSANCE AND HUMANISM IN EUROPE

Chaos and Efforts Toward Solution

The Roman Church	3
The Renaissance	4
Precursors	6
Renaissance Chaos in Europe	9
Absolutism and Self-Assertion	10
Liberating Forces	15
The Impulse to Freedom Astir	16
Renaissance-Humanism in Europe	19
The Popes of the Renaissance and Humanism	23
Emancipation of the State in Italy and England	28
Machiavelli	28
Sir Thomas More	34
Humanism in Italy and France	35
Giordano Bruno	35
Montaigne	40

CHAPTER II

RENAISSANCE — HUMANISM IN GERMANY

The Hapsburg Rulers of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation in the Sixteenth Century	47
Humanism in German Lands	52
Reuchlin, the First Comprehensive Linguist	56

Ulrich von Hutten, Nationalistic Humanist	57
Thomas Murner, the Will to Reform Within the Church.....	59
Erasmus	60
The Christian Humanism of Erasmus	62
The Consummate Humanist	66
Paracelsus, the Independent Seeker	69
Paracelsus and the German Language	73
God and Nature	75
Renaissance Influence upon the Townsman	77
The Will to Know Seeks God	83
D. Johann Fausten	83
Nicolaus Copernicus Seeks God in Nature's Laws	86
The Right to Seek Elevates Man	87
Seeking God in His Creation	89

CHAPTER III

RENAISSANCE ART

Form out of Chaos

Efforts in the Realm of the Visible	95
Leonardo da Vinci	97
Michelangelo	99
Classical Influence in Germany	100
Albrecht Dürer — The Protestant	101
The Apokalypse	102
Christ in Gethsemane	103
Three Imaginative Engravings	104
Personality in Portraiture	106
Still Life	107
The Four Apostles — Dürer's Last Message	109
Matthias Grünewald — the Mystic	111
The Isenheim Altar	111
Hans Holbein — Classical Restraint	115
Lukas Cranach	120
Nature in German Art	121
Pure Landscape	122
The Reformation and Art	124
German Protestantism and Music and Poetry	125
German Sixteenth Century Reconciles God and Man	126

CHAPTER IV

THE REFORMATION — MARTIN LUTHER

PART ONE

Man's Relation to God and Man

Solution in the Realm of Spirit

Inadequacies of Intellectualism	131
Martin Luther — Early Life	132
The Church of Rome and Penitence	137
Ninety-five Theses	143
Acclaim and Defense	148
Reform Within the Church of Rome	150
Responsibility to God and Self	156
Three Manifestos — 1520	159
1. To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation	159
2. Concerning the Babylonian Captivity of the Church	165
3. On the Freedom of a Christian Man	168
Freedom Inherent in Christianity	171
Luther's Strength in the Face of Increased Opposition	174
Diet of Worms — 1521	175
Translation of Bible Begun at the Wartburg	182
Revolutionary Consequences of Luther's Reform Activities.....	184
Not by Violence, but by the Word	189
The Peasants' War — 1524-1525	193
Luther and the Peasants' War	196
Evangelicals and Sects	207
Evangelicals Derisively Called "Protestants"	210
Evangelicals and the State	212
Evangelical Prince and Subject	216
Diet of Augsburg — 1530	220
Luther, the Man	223
Accusation of Coarseness in Polemical Writings	223
Attitude toward Detractors	226
His Forthrightness Rebukes Evil	230
Kindness, Sensitive Discernment	233
Doubts Concerning the Justification of His Cause	238
Confidence in the Justification of His Cause	243
Growth and Development	244
Institutions of Society	246

The Church	247
Temporal Power	257
Celibacy and Marriage	269
Rebirth in Christ Sanctifies Life	276

CHAPTER V

THE REFORMATION — MARTIN LUTHER

PART TWO

The Relation of God to Man

Solution in the Realm of Spirit (continued)

The Bible	283
The Word of God	285
Validity of the Books of the Bible	296
Rational and Non-Rational Experience of God	302
God, the Holy One	305
The "Otherness" of God	311
Luther's <i>Weltanschauung</i>	313
Mysticism in Luther's Theology	318
The Triune God	323
God, Creator and Father, Immanent in His Creation	328
God the Son, Jesus Christ, Saviour and Lord	333
Christ, the Person	333
The Work of Christ: Reconciliation and Redemption.....	340
God, the Holy Spirit, Comforter and Sanctifier	349
The Will — Source of Good and Evil	355
Freedom of the Will	363
<i>De Servo Arbitrio</i>	363
The Will Affects All of Life	372
The Function of the Law	375
Fulfillment of the Law	382
The Act of Grace	386
Tribulation and Triumph in Grace	398
Justification by Faith in Christ	406
Eschatology	416
Christian Love	418
Christian Faith	422

Faith, the Source of Joy and Peace	430
Prayer	437
Summary	444
Luther's Position in History	447
Other Protestant Leaders	450
1. Melanchthon	450
2. Zwingli	453
3. Calvin	455
The Sovereign God	457
Mundane Life	461
The State	462
Luther and Calvin	467
Protestantism — A Summary	469
The Counter Reformation	470
Renaissance and Reformation — A Summary	475
The Reformation — A Consummation of the Hope of Man.....	476
The Century in Retrospect	477
The End of the Century	479
Luther References	482
References to Chapter I (1-13).....	483
References to Chapter II (1-21).....	483
References to Chapter III (1-30).....	484
References to Chapter IV (1-330).....	484
References to Chapter V (1-352).....	492

ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece — *The Crucifixion*

Painting by Albrecht Dürer

Christ in Gethsemane

Woodcut by Albrecht Dürer

Erasmus

Portrait by Hans Holbein

Martin Luther

Portrait by Lukas Cranach the Elder

Rest on the Flight to Egypt

Painting by Lukas Cranach

Knight, Death and Devil

Copperplate Engraving by Albrecht Dürer

Mountain Landscape

Painting by Albrecht Altdorfer

Isenheim Altar — *The Crucifixion*

Painting by Matthias Grünewald

Isenheim Altar

Annunciation, Birth, Resurrection

Painting by Matthias Grünewald

The Four Apostles

Painting by Albrecht Dürer

CHAPTER I

RENAISSANCE AND HUMANISM
IN EUROPE

*Chaos and Efforts
toward
Solution*

THE ROMAN CHURCH

At the close of the fifteenth century all nations of Western Europe professed the faith of the Roman Church and yielded spiritual obedience to the Papal See. From the Greek Origen of Alexandria, 182-251, and the Latin Father St. Cyprian, 200-258, to St. Francis of Assisi, 1182-1226, all Christian leaders were bound to the Roman Church and its variations. In the greatest of the schoolmen, Thomas Aquinas, 1225-1274, life and thinking were obligated by its sanction. For the Hebrew-Christian religion, a hope, a conviction, an ecstasy, had through the Middle Ages become an all-powerful and authoritative institution called "the Church." It is true, its rule had not gone unchallenged; throughout the Middle Ages the desire for inner and outward freedom sporadically endeavored realization: the Waldensians professed no need of the Church and were decimated by crusade and inquisition; the Albigenses attempted reform of the Church disseminating false doctrine, as they understood it, and were massacred; Arnold of Brescia, the Italian monk, was hanged at the instigation of Pope Adrian IV in 1155, his body burned, and his ashes thrown into the Tiber, because he condemned priestly riches and corruption and urged opposition to papal power; John Wyclif and the Lollards in England, seeking to abolish hierarchical authority, were persecuted and almost exterminated; and John Hus in Bohemia, a follower of Wyclif and the Lollards, like them attempted religious reform prematurely and was condemned by the Council of Constance in 1415 and burned as a heretic. In 1498 the Italian Dominican monk Savonarola was executed for heresy. All these denied the supreme and infallible authority of the bishops of Rome in matters purely religious.

Shaken to its very foundation on occasion, the Roman Church nevertheless appeared to stand surpassingly firm at the end of the fifteenth century. The Church had come to be a complex system, a regular and fixed attitude and action, reaching into and binding to itself every detail of private and public life. It had developed a

hierarchy expertly organized and inextricably woven into the law, language, and demeanor of peoples. From the old Roman religions it had taken over the temple, the incense, the ritualistic tapers, the visible images. In beautiful ceremonies and fascinations it had insinuated itself in a thousand ways into the very marrow of men's existence. It required sacrifices of many kinds, and these were accorded by exceptionally devout men and women, especially in the monasteries.

But though the Roman Church in the course of its history afforded the world moments of high spiritual vision, though it made use of the world's goods to attract and quicken the human spirit, though art and architecture vied with each other in an attempt to sanctify worldly treasures to the exaltation of men's souls, by the sixteenth century there was felt to be, nonetheless, a lack, an unfulfilled ideal. For the splendor and force of the medieval Church had now deteriorated to mean in general that something be *done* rather than thought or felt or believed.

Since the power of the Church derived from the complete domination it wielded over man's mind, body, and soul, liberation could be effected only by the mind and spirit of man. Hope had to be awakened, aims and goals, identical with the one invariable aspiration of mankind, had to be pursued. And this emancipation from the Church, which once was great and competent in its purposes, this setting man free both within and without, was the accomplishment of the sixteenth century, climaxed in two cumulative revolutionary movements, the Renaissance and the Reformation, both so powerful, that with them the modern era was born.

THE RENAISSANCE

The movement called Renaissance, new birth, marked the transition from medieval to modern history. Its fairly definite beginning lay in Italy in the fourteenth century, and from there it gradually spread over Western Europe until its force and influence put an end to the domination of Scholasticism, of feudalism, and of the Church in secular matters. This movement soon extended to and transformed manners, learning, philosophy, science, religion, politics, and art. It helped to establish the foundation of modern human freedom.

The Renaissance, rebirth of the human spirit, denoted in its essentially restricted sense that enthusiasm for Greek and Latin culture, which arose in Italy in the revival of classical literature and learning on the one hand, and of classical art on the other. It freed man's intellect and spirit, liberated him to the ideal of ancient Greece and Rome, to the virility of an awakened personality and an enhanced confidence, to the recognition of the grandeur of his being, and to unbounded exultation therein. Life in all its exuberance and prodigality was ardently embraced; the right to train and use the natural, inquiring propensities of the mind could be denied no longer, nor could the development of talent and ability be forestalled.

The Renaissance shifted human interest from the world to come to the world of today, from God to man. It substituted a pagan joy in life for the Christian concern with life after death. Reaching beyond his own life, man now strove to understand and explain the natural world in which he lived. He discovered a new relation to nature, he found a new way to his own inner being and a new manner of observing life, and he learned to know the meaning of subjectivism and individualism. Spurred by the optimism springing from the potency of a dynamic worldly culture and from a life no longer subject to dogma and ecclesiastical command, he elevated himself to the center of creation, and set up the *uomo universale*, the orator, poet, scholar. In him as universal man were merged mind and senses, all art, learning, poetry, all genius of the world.

He appraised his environment realistically. In the field of art he sought to interpret himself and the beauty of the human form. He exalted the power of human reason and aspired to the achievement of classical perfection in art and literature. In the thirteenth century Scholasticism had admitted an element of reason (*ratio*) into its tenets, and reason, thus justified as a source of knowledge, declined to remain forever the servant of faith, and declared itself independent of creed and dogma.

The Renaissance was a many-sided, comprehensive European movement, unified in the allegiance to the things of the intellect and the imagination. There was a will toward self-emancipation, an intentness upon fashioning life in a more liberal and agreeable way. This will asserted the natural rights of reason, sense, and

heart. It searched out the various means toward that release where intellect, emotion, and imagination might explore and play untrammelled by ecclesiastical prohibition. It moved to conquer this earth, to live in it and to taste of its pleasurable; its search directed not only to old and neglected sources of human enjoyment, but to the discovery of its original fountainhead in art and literature. The end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth century had known these delights, when the rough vigor of the Middle Ages had turned to the charm of chivalry and gained pleasure in epic, lyric, sculpture, and architecture.

To be sure, the material world gained firm lodgment in the consciousness of men in the course of the Middle Ages, in travel, commerce, in the crafts, in the learned professions, and in the fine arts; in all of the phases in which men shape and subdue a recalcitrant earth. But in their mundane pursuits men still acknowledged the spiritual supremacy of the Church and depended upon its guidance and instruction. Thus their inherited faith was not disturbed, and faith and life continued bound in close partnership.

Precursors

From earliest days the force known as mysticism had in a few great personalities freed the soul from the authority of the Church, without disturbing its design. The inward freedom won by mysticism dispenses with the mediation of priest and Church, for in meditation the faithful one arrives at a consciousness of God and a manifestation of the Divine in the "spark" of the secluded soul, which thus establishes direct communion with God. Prepared by conscious detachment from external affairs, the mind is directed inward and toward God in moments of silence. Physical quiescence, a being alone in mute thought, awe, and inspiration, makes ready for a mood of receptivity to spiritual energy, wisdom, and love. A passivity vitally awake and receptive to God's will quickens and exalts the spirit as it complies with the injunction, "Be still, and know that I am God."¹ Through the indwelling of the Spirit of God, the personal will submits freely to His eternal will, which is love. This freedom every mystic knew, from Plato to Meister Eckhart, 1260-1327; and in its application they were all precursors of the sixteenth century.

Throughout the centuries there were those who sought an answer to life's meaning in the world of things. Such a one, excited by the joy in learning, in the arts, in liberation from churchly bondage, was the Hohenstaufen Emperor Frederick II, 1194-1250. This Emperor of Germany and King of Sicily founded the University of Naples. His court in Sicily fostered scholarly intercourse among German, Italian, Greek, and Saracen men of learning; here also the study of classical literature and of source material for the just comprehension of the subject was promoted.

At the end of the century, a more immediate precursor of this new spiritual and intellectual awakening in Italy appeared in Dante Alighieri, 1265-1321, though he was still bound to Scholasticism and to the Church. His love for antiquity made him a prophet of that new man, who, purged, elevated, renewed, is reborn into true humanity through the merging in him of Christianity and the ancient Roman "virtues" which beget peace and justice. Imaginative beauty, perfection of workmanship, emancipated force of intellect, bind together aesthetic, political, and cultural ideals in the "Epic of Medievalism," the *Divina Commedia*, this union of Hebrew, Christian, and classical elements in one of the great masterpieces of all time. In this epic and in Dante's lyrics the Middle Ages still prevailed in allegory and symbol, in theology and vision; a new spirit, however, was introduced by its firm grasp on life and art.

The singularly complicated personality of Francesco Petrarch, 1304-1373, early rebelled against Scholasticism because it failed to gratify his passion for pure knowledge and pure beauty. He objected to the view compounded of Christian theology and Aristotelianism which in medieval days interpreted Ovid and Virgil allegorically. For these ancients delighted him. Their aesthetic consciousness contrasted so markedly with the prosaic sobriety of the scholasticists. Quick to note the excellence of classical literature and its value as a means of culture, he started the search for lost manuscripts. He moved to replace scholastic philosophy in the curriculum of the schools with literary studies, with the classics. Here he discovered a new meaning of both man and this world.

Petrarch gained world fame because of his sonnets, expressions of exceptionally stirring moments in his life, and his moral philosophy. Moreover, nature took on a new significance for him and

it was he who first climbed a mountain for the sake of the view. Up on Mont-Vantoux, at the hour of the setting sun, he opened St. Augustine's *Confessions*: men marvel at the heights of mountains and the surging seas, at the course of rivers and the broad oceans and the orbit of the stars, but they are unmindful of self, and do not regard man. And Petrarch, well read in the Latin poets and himself a poet, suddenly realized that the ancients explored the human soul above all else. And the meaning of Socrates' "Know thyself" and the Augustinian "within man does truth dwell" revealed to him the individual, incomparably vital purport and purpose of his own being. That particular, wholly new experience declared all scholastic argument and logic to be as nothing compared with a moment of fulfilled life. And so the poetry of his youth pictured the natural moods of heart and mind in his love for Laura; he reflected upon self and man and desired nothing so much as fame in his middle years, and he did not shrink from admitting the weariness of his latter years. And in this self-analysis he belongs to the modern age.

Petrarch, like Dante, hoped for a universal Christian rebirth, a united and regenerated Italy under a ruler combining in himself both Caesar and the Messiah. Restless, unsatisfied, ceaselessly active, the eclectic Petrarch was fascinated by both Christian and pagan thought, but unable to reconcile the two, he continued distraught by the attendant compromise. His enthusiasm for classical literature however gave impulse to humanistic studies, so potent a force in the Renaissance.

Giovanni Boccaccio, 1313-1375, continued collecting and copying ancient manuscripts. He maintained that a scholar must know Latin and Greek. Though the medieval student was acquainted with a limited portion of the Latin classics, the Greek language was hardly known to him. And the ancient classics he knew, he could not rightly comprehend, for, bred in the cloisters and trained in the logic of Scholasticism, he was held to an allegorical interpretation of words and facts. He thus had no access to the store of classical wisdom and beauty. Furthermore, the pagan past was unchristian, therefore suspect. In contrast to the other-worldliness which had so captivated the imagination of the Middle Ages, Boccaccio's *Decameron* emphasized this life and this world.

Boccaccio was followed by numerous Italian scholars who jour-

neyed to Byzantium, the holy city of the new revelation. By 1400 the humanists had become acquainted with the Greek language and thereafter pursued the study of Greek literature with the same zest their predecessors had brought to the study of Latin works. Thus, with the aid of classical antiquity and authority, modern man was born in Italy in the fourteenth century. But he did not achieve his full stature until the dawn of the sixteenth.

Renaissance Chaos in Europe in the Sixteenth Century

This is the century of High Renaissance, the movement which fostered an eager exploration and a delighted acceptance of all secular aspects of human life. With emphasis upon the singular, on differentiation, on the individual, the sixteenth century produced not only great and greatest masters, scholars, geographic explorers, high-minded, intrepid liberators of mind and spirit, peerless artists, but also a motley assemblage of rebels, conspirators, freethinkers, sceptics, fantastic visionaries, audacious conquerors, insolent oppressors.

The discovery of America diverted attention from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and invited Portugal, Spain, France, the Netherlands, and England to further colonial and mercantile expansion and contrived for each a great empire with colonies and dependencies in both hemispheres. With the transfer of commercial activity from the Baltic and Mediterranean to the Atlantic seaboard, the Hanseatic League, the confederation of cities formed for mutual protection in the fourteenth century, declined. The guilds also disintegrated. Great firms, such as those of the Fugger and Welser, were established.

Russia freed herself from the Tartars and thrust her antennae into Siberia. The Near East lay paralysed under the yoke of the Turks, the terror of the West, who gradually pushed across Transylvania and Hungary, and foot by foot up the Danube toward Germany, threatening to sweep the Christians off the Mediterranean. They were finally halted at Lepanto in 1571. The Christian powers of the Mediterranean combined to avert the ruin of Christendom. Upon the conquest of Cyprus by the Turks, these states formed a holy league of defense, chiefly promoted by Pope Pius V. Though the republic of Venice supplied the bulk of forces, Philip II of Spain, sovereign also of Naples and Sicily, lent his help.

His natural brother, Don John of Austria, commanded the fleet of the league. The Battle of Lepanto effectually stopped the naval aggression of the Turks in the Eastern Mediterranean. Historically it was the last encounter on a grand scale between fleets of galleys. And it was the last Crusade. Lepanto provided one of the proud moments in the history of Philip II and the chivalrous Don John of Austria.

Individualism bestirred itself and proceeded to cast off the fetters that bind men to unified systems. The medieval European had for the most part lived a rude, agrarian life. Society had been divided into castes, each clearly delineated and limited to its own sphere. Cleric, nobleman, peasant, burgher — a member of the guild — had derived rights, obligations, manners, dress from his group. Little by little the townsman, impatient of the impediments imposed by his class, aided now by the new learning and the new meaning of life, ventured forth from the protection of his group and demanded that his own efforts shape his fortune. In extravagant reaction against previous restraints, he came to hold that he might arrive at his own code of conduct, and that he was justified in breaking through every barrier obstructing his freedom of expression and development. As is usual, excess of freedom leads to license, and by the side of the many great men of the century lived some of the supreme villains of history.

Absolutism and Self-Assertion

The political skies of the sixteenth century were beclouded, storm-torn. Alliances of political powers changed kaleidoscopically, marriages between reigning Houses were planned, consummated, and dissolved, as whim and expediency dictated. Mercenary battles, peasant and civil wars, feuds between princes and cities and among each other rendered cultural work difficult. Absolutism gathered force as the feudal state declined, not only in political, but in religious matters as well. Both Church and state, intolerant of dissenting opinion, had come to apply the Inquisition as an instrument of death against heresy; it was made the only alternative to conversion. It came into being in 1231 as a part of ecclesiastical criminal law. Torture, as a means of evidence, was first authorized by Innocent IV in 1252, and confirmed by succeed-

ing popes. When found guilty and contumacious by the judges, who were generally chosen from among members of the Dominican order, the culprit was handed over to the secular arm so that sentence might be executed.

The Inquisition was introduced into Spain in 1237. But by the end of the fifteenth century the religious views of the large Mohammedan and Jewish population of Spain, at variance with the tenets of the one and infallible Roman Church, were held to be poison inevitably inviting eternal perdition to the whole country; and Ferdinand and Isabella felt it their holy duty to initiate the Spanish Inquisition in 1478. (It was abolished in 1834.) The most notable Grand Inquisitor, the Dominican Torquemada, 1420-1498, was charged by its use with the task of proselyting or committing the unbeliever to the agonies of fagot and stake.

Asolutism further tended toward centralization of power in the hands of personalities, self-assertive men and women. It appropriated Renaissance magnificence to its own uses. Lavish display paraded at the meeting of Francis I of France, 1515-1547, with Henry VIII of England, 1509-1547, on "The Field of the Cloth of Gold" near Calais in 1520; there many a one, it was said, "bore on his back" his mills, forests, and meadows. Francis I, gifted and brilliant in conversation, lover of splendor, devoted to the arts, encouraged the introduction of the Italian Renaissance to France. The magnificence of his castles, such as Fontainebleau, for instance, testifies to the grandeur of his court. The absolutism of his reign presented the whimsical alternation of bold, impetuous expeditions with periods of indolent inactivity, of ruthless ambition for power with determined defense of the Church; a reign altogether of unrestrained extravagance, relentlessness, and violence.

Henry VIII of England, zealous for the greatness of his country, and abetted by personal ambition, made sure that the executioner's ax was not idle during the English Reign of Terror, which in 1536 strangled to death as a heretic the priest and translator of the New Testament into English, William Tyndale. Henry VIII, who was deaf to religious scruples, whose rhetoric overwhelmed his hearers and made him popular with the middle classes, broke all rules of law and justice. England presented the spectacle of tyrannizing the religious conscience of a whole people for decades. The King

set his course toward national independence and material welfare, and the people, their instincts satisfied, were willing to let the head of a political state control the inmost concern of human existence. Henry deprived the prime prelate of the Church of his spiritual authority in England and himself appropriated it to his sovereign use. This prince of earthly power and material might declared himself the Vicar of Christ, and made himself the head on earth of the Church of England directly under God. Thus the English crown embodied the most radical form of despotism possible: the absolute control over the national will. A reign of terror cut down all dissenters from the ruler's whim and command, be they Protestant or Roman Catholic.

Henry VIII punished the recalcitrance of the unhappy martyrs with stake and fagot rather for refusing to be convinced by his own eloquence and divinity as the pontiff-king, than by reason of their heresy in rejecting the true faith. It would be difficult to say by what name the Church of England under Henry VIII should be called. It was not Protestant, and it was just as far from being truly Roman Catholic. But it was under Henry VIII that the way was paved for the English Reformation, which under Edward VI, 1547-1553, carried the Church of England still further away from the Church of Rome. The English Book of Common Prayer, in the main a translation of the old Latin "Missal and Breviary," was prepared by Archbishop Cranmer of Canterbury, Protestant divine and reformer, later burned at the stake by Mary.

The autocratic Philip II of Spain, 1556-1598, prompted by the Catholic fervor traditional among his people and in his Hapsburg family, austere, darkly negative, thought of himself as the "royal monk." Lacking natural talent, he was slow to decide, and bound by rigid rule. Plodding, cold, obstinate, always at work, actuated by a rage for minutiae, which in the end made for an enfeebled grasp of heroic essentials, he nevertheless discovered pleasures in this world, married four times—even as another tyrant of the century, Henry VIII, tossed aside all restraint upon his despotic will and espoused six royal wives.

But Philip's diligence in detail made for order and law at home, for security of life, for prompt legal action, such as was unusual in his time. After the first excesses of conquest, his colonial admin-

istration restrained ambitious conquerors, introduced orderly rule and fostered peaceful development of trade in his immense colonial realms. In contrast with the practice in later English and French colonies, Philip forbade the banishment, dispossession, or extermination of the Indians. He protected them by law and trained them to orderly work. Thoughtful of the needs of the natives, he gave the direction of colonial supervision into the hands of the missionaries of Roman Catholic orders. This proved a boon to the colonies. Philip's Spain was a monarchy, an early modern national political power, and Spanish history looks upon his rule as an epoch of splendor.

Jealous of his kingly dignity, Philip kept himself aloof from his people. Lonely, his later years sought relaxation in prostration before crucifix or relic by the hour. The Escorial in Madrid, cloister, tomb, and palace all in one, reflects the cold, darkly brooding disposition of Philip. Yet withal he spoke several languages, wrote correct Latin, was a devotee to art and music, and a lover of books.

The Spain of Philip II suffered gradual impoverishment and paralysis, an Armada demolished, its power exhausted in vain attempts to subdue the Netherlands politically and religiously. Philip, fiercely fanatical as were so many in this century, terrified by the thought of religious diversity, spurred on the Inquisition. Fagot piles multiplied in town and hamlet. He released the "Spanish Fury" in the Low Countries, where the illustrious counts Egmont and Horn were executed, and where William of Orange, the Silent, of the ancient German House of Nassau, owner of large estates in Holland and Brabant, at last fell by an assassin's hand, a victim of the "fury" of the age. However, determined upon religious and political freedom, possessed of a stout heart and uncompromising fortitude, William before his death witnessed the birth of the new Dutch Republic, gave it stamina and built the political groundwork for its independence.

In the midst of the transitional chaos, women came to power: Catherine de Medici in France; Margaret of Parma, regent in the Netherlands. The storm-beset, vivacious Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, of subtle charm, left none indifferent whomsoever she touched, whether in Scotland, France, or England; her reign in Scotland precipitated her own tragedy and a succession of climaxes

unique in history. Uncompromising in her devotion to Rome, another Mary, Queen of England, filled the prisons and lighted the fires of persecution throughout her realm; to Protestant martyrology were added the names Latimer, Ridley, and Cranmer, and history confers upon her the epithet, "Bloody Mary." On the other hand, however, England may claim the most successful national sovereign of the age in the person of Queen Elizabeth.

The drive toward self-assertion and independence advanced into the century, bestowing profusely both malediction and benediction, moderation and excess, growth and restraint, turbulence and inner peace. The Renaissance, the Reformation, the Peasants' Revolt, the Huguenot and Smalkaldic wars, struggles between Catholicism and Protestantism, the Revolt of the Netherlands, all demanded freedom, inward or outward, or both. But where freedom was sought, oppressors were at hand to execute summarily: a Catherine de Medici, 1519-1589, of the famous Florentine family, queen of Henry II of France, widowed, mother of four royal sons, pitiful scions of the House of Valois for whom she desired to preserve the throne. Ambitious, unprincipled, she plunged into the conflict between Protestant and Catholic; she connived in the endless persecutions of the Huguenots, and like other rulers of her time intrigued, bribed, prevaricated, and by the employment of conscienceless spying and informing must be held largely responsible for the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, 1572. Yet France, Catherine's adopted country, at the end of the century, 1598, granted religious and civil liberty in the Edict of Nantes.

This despotic self-reliance also prevailed in Italy. Here were let loose the tempest of an Alexander VI of the Spanish family of Borgia, infamous for his murders and excesses; and the crimes of his unscrupulous son, Cesare Borgia, skilled in the manipulations of poison and assassination. Extraordinarily tempestuous was the youth of Cesare's sister Lucretia, later the irreproachable wife of the Duke of Este at Ferrara. The century's catalogue of opprobrium must include also an Alessandro de Medici, 1510-1537, profligate and tyrannical duke of Florence; the Spanish Duke of Alva, 1508-1582, whose "Council of Blood" ravaged the Netherlands and Frisia; a Christian II, 1481-1559, King of Denmark and Sweden, the "Nero of the North," who slew the outstanding men

of Sweden in the "Bloodbath" of Stockholm, 1520; an Ivan the Terrible in Russia, 1530-1584; a Francis I in France, of adamant heart, indurate to the promptings of human compassion in his determination to eradicate the Waldenses and all heretics, including a John Calvin, driven out of France in 1533; agents all of crime and cruelty, but often, as in the case of the persecutions and the Inquisition, engaged in because punishment of heresy was regarded as a duty which might be neglected only at the peril of Heaven's displeasure.

Liberating Forces

But on this dark background of absolutist individualism in tyrannical and Inquisitional excesses a vari-colored pageant of yet other forces unfolded. The confidence in man's capacity to develop, trust in the power of the intellect, was unbounded. Belief in the power of enlightenment called forth a strong self-consciousness and directed toward exploration of environment, of the inner self, of the mysterious, and thence to the discovery of the varied, the singular, the multiplicity of impulses, sentiments, thoughts. Daring figures flashed through the century: Fiesco, the Genoese conspirator, Don Carlos, son of Philip II, stalked by mystery and tragedy, Egmont, Tasso, the epic poet, the Huguenots, Lucrezia Borgia, Götz von Berlichingen, the knight of "the Iron Hand"; Faust, physician, alchemist, astrologer, diviner, reputed magician, unbridled in spirit in his will to know — heroes in a century of drama who grappled with the forces of heaven and hell. Faust epitomizes his age and its many, whose impassioned and soaring imagination embraced the world and found in it no hold, no sanctuary, except it be in consummate faith, art, or speculation. Of Faustian cast were a Paracelsus, Tasso, Hutten, Bruno, Michelangelo, and finally a Luther; in the latter the Faustian urge to know the secrets of this world was most completely translated into the need to fathom the depths of pure spirit.

But this striving for completeness of life was not limited to individuals alone. There were numberless groups and varieties of zealots, all intent upon the realization of their particular interpretation of "freedom" — in Germany the hosts of Carlstadt and Thomas Münzer, the Iconoclasts, the Anabaptists, and Revelation-

ists; the Iconoclasts and "Beggars" in the Netherlands. There were the groups around Caspar Schwenkfeld, 1490-1561, Silesian nobleman, expounder of the "Bible Spirit illumined," propounding a mystical, pietistic, Christocentric theology, in which the individual conscience was uncontrolled, but individual life subject to rigorous discipline.

A century, experiencing in itself such vitalistic and direct drama, granted no possibility to dramatic literary utterance, until, at its end, grown weary with much contending, it brought forth a Marlowe and a Shakespeare. They bound into form the turbulence and excesses, the cleansing and self-containment which the Renaissance and Reformation had cast upon the stream of time. Shakespeare, 1564-1616, the culmination of the Renaissance spirit, depicted strong personalities whose stormy and violent impulses break into action. Free and freed human beings, they accomplish deeds of uninhibited passion, and in their will to power hesitate before no act of monstrosity and crime. As the Renaissance was zealous in the discovery of all of life, so this greatest of Renaissance dramatists had to search out the depths where character, guilt, and fate are interwoven.

The Impulse to Freedom Astir

And everywhere was found the concomitant analysis, examination, dissection, everywhere disputation and debate. The Calvinists unleashed their fiery judgment upon the Queen of Scots and carried it to the Netherlands, England, and Scotland; in England sect was set against sect, Dissenter against Conformist, and Separatist against Catholic; in Germany Protestant disagreed with Protestant and in Italy Raphael gave lasting form to the *Disputa* that so agitated the century.

The impulse to freedom was astir, whether for good or for evil, whether limited or unbounded. The Smalkaldic Wars, fought intermittently from 1546, ended with the Peace of Augsburg, 1555. The principle underlying the peace and expressed in the phrase, "*cujus regio ejus religio*," put into the hands of the territorial lord not only the choice of religion for his territory, but also the power to eject from it any who did not share his faith. This principle,

though still restrictive and coercive for the individual, in fact does mark a step forward toward religious freedom. It was a valuable acquisition made by mankind, so slow in its spiritual growth. The principle directed from the authoritative and compulsory religious unity of the one Roman Church to the religion of the individual state. But the article of Ecclesiastical Reservation, also a provision of the Peace, could not but lead inevitably to future religious, civil, and international wars.

Aristocracy again assumed prominence. The German princes hampered Charles V on all issues, French nobility united with the Huguenots, in England the aristocrat grew rich through appropriation of Church property. Luther, while in hiding at the Wartburg, called himself Squire George; he had previously addressed a missive to the "Christian nobility of the German nation." Dürer's art transfigured the Christian knight, for whom Erasmus had written a *Manual*. Edmund Spenser, in the century's last decade, allegorized the romance of chivalry in his *Faerie Queene*. The romanticism of knighthood and chivalry greeted the world again, partly in playful fantasy, partly in fact as a pale reflection of its period of glory, the twelfth century. It gazed amusedly at itself in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, it delighted in sportive extravagance in Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel* and at the beginning of the next century in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. To be sure, John Lyly's *Euphues* wore raiment more elegant and splendid than his thought. But the "peerless" Sir Philip Sidney stood firm as the model of chivalry in his *Arcadia*, though his gallantry was attracted ever more toward idyllic, pastoral charm. The sturdy English spirit in him, saturate with the splendor and gentility of the Italian Renaissance, adopted the sonnet to convey his love for the virtues of Stella.

Noblemen like Ariosto, Ronsard, Tasso, became poets. The Spanish statesman Mendoza was a scholar as well as novelist, and the Portuguese Camoëns' *Lusiad* and Montemajor's *Diana* hearkened again to the strains of the troubadours. An aristocratic attitude toward life and national exultation proclaimed with Ulrich von Hutten: "It is a joy to live!"² The dynamism of the spirit of knighthood, heroism, and romanticism burst forth in the aristocrat

Paracelsus, in Montaigne, in the born country squire, the zealous Loyola, whose Jesuit order called upon the knights of Christ to do battle for the Church.

The more the aristocrat isolated himself, the more chaotic and bizarre became the point of view of the commonalty. The problems of the Middle Ages appeared again, still unsolved: astrology, alchemy, magic, demonology. Bewilderment prevailed, inability to distinguish between superstition and truth. Critique, wit, banter, caricature, satire abounded, coarseness and crudeness held sway. The clown claimed the stage, not the witless simpleton, but the funmaker, whose droll adroitness belabored the ignorance, extravagance, and super-intellectualism abroad in his age. Germany applauded the wit of Renard the Fox; the pranks, merry jests, and stratagems of Till Eulenspiegel, the rural "owl and mirror" rogue, who mimicked and befooled the townpeople, so phlegmatic in their gullibility and fanatic in their vanity. The patron of grossness, Grobianus, was canonized; and in 1494 Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff*, Ship of Fools, was "launched." This blunt satire catalogued more than a hundred buffooneries, and it was soon translated into Latin, for here a humanistic moralist published boldly the crassness of *voluptas* and contrasted it with the enlightened sweetness of *virtus*.

A boisterous carnival of Aristophanic hilarity rocked the century. Francis I gave vogue to the mask, which the fourteenth century had introduced, and the fifteenth had suppressed. To the seventeenth century Puritan it will be anathema. *Facetiae* rollicked in raillery and mockery. Sharp shafts of satire flashed, leaving none unscathed. The sensitive Montaigne delighted in dialectic coarseness, Margaret of Navarre, sister of Francis I, revived the unabashed naturalism of the fourteenth century, and Boccaccio's *Decameron* provided a source from which the poets from Hans Sachs to Shakespeare drew. Above all, boisterous laughter punctuated Rabelais' (1483-1553) ribald mirth and grotesque satire portraying the age. In this hyper-aristophanic farce, this masterpiece of mingled humor, wisdom, profundity, indecency, erudition, levity, imagination, realism, a penetrating genius mocked at the human race, its insensate desires, at the credulity of its hopes. In 1554 the first picaresque novel, *Lazarillo de Tormes*, attributed by

some to the Spanish Diego Mendoza, 1503-1575, was published, and therewith the rogue came into his own in literature.

RENAISSANCE-HUMANISM IN EUROPE

Out of the heterogeneous, contradictory conditions of the Renaissance, out of its thought and hope, the movement called Humanism proposed to create order and form. It was the intellectual and literary phase of the Renaissance. Those devoted especially to the Greek and Roman humanities were called humanists due to their interest in the *literae humaniores*, the *human letters*, in contrast to the *divine letters*, or traditional theology. That phase of ancient Greek culture which declares man to be the measure of all things vitalized this literary and scientific movement. It was and still is concerned with man and diverts the gaze from heaven to earth, from the "beyond" to the "here." Humanism, derived from *homo*, *humanitas*, granted new prerogatives and new responsibilities to the human mind, to the human being as such. Humanism did not necessarily seek the ultimate in things. But it was certain that nothing which ever moved and interested living man or woman could ever wholly lose its vital force, no language he speaks or has spoken, no dream over which he lingers or has lingered, no prophecy or wonder before which he stands adoring, nothing to which he has ever given ardor, time, or devotion.

When faced, as he must be, with decisions which are rooted in soil outside the area of his formal education and culture, the humanist admits that Humanism is not able from within itself to answer the questions pertaining to the What of man, his Whence and Whither. Every individual must find the solution in his own philosophy or theology. The humanists' inclination to Greek and Roman literature, their bent to imitate Cicero and Lucian, evinced a belief in an objective competency in experience; this objectivity defended an ethos, a moralistic basis averse to metaphysics, and therefore neither contemporary Scholasticism nor even the "truths of God" proclaimed by Thomas Aquinas could direct the paths of these searching scholars. For in the pride of the enlightenment brought about by his own rebirth, the humanist regarded the Middle Ages as decadent and barbarian.

Humanism espoused culture as the practical means of moulding

human life. From the second half of the fifteenth century onward its stress on literary consciousness and good literary style created a new, independent, educated class, composed of men of learning and letters, theologians, philologists, scientists, jurists, physicians. This class, drawing upon a collective society, upon nobility and men from among the great masses alike, and presenting in this respect a replica of the priesthood of the hierarchy, used Latin, the language of the Church. With antiquity almost canonized, knowledge and the use of a nicely phrased and highly polished Latin was not only imperative, but also a mark of distinction. This demand often engendered nothing better than stylistic artfulness, affectation of Ciceronian Latin, invented oratory, and unnatural pathos. But the conviction held that eloquence alone could express serious and devoted love of truth and that man's God-given faculty of reason had to employ a style at once powerful, vivid, stirring, and appropriate. The humanist thus, well-versed in the Greek and Latin tongues, endeavored to impart wisdom by means of rhetoric. And he found the model for this educational task in pagan and Christian literature alike.

Greek culture was exalted, classical training and the cultivation of the polite branches of knowledge became paramount in the making of the ideal Renaissance humanist. By the sixteenth century he reveled in the proud privileges and high capabilities that were his, and, equipped with the power of self-determination, triumphed in a released, even unbridled pursuit of truth. He regarded as the prerogative and duty of man that he bring into activity the totality of his being, that he develop all faculties, all senses to repleteness, that he assimilate the high-mindedness and nobility of the Greeks, the distinction of the Roman, so that an abundant life here might be his. Through the study of the humanities and letters true man must augment his better, rational self to a manifold, harmonious, firm personality, he must widen the boundaries of knowledge in every field of human endeavor.

This conception of man had been formulated essentially by Cicero, 106-43 B.C., polished and urbane Roman, who had appropriated the intellectual culture of Greece and translated it from the free and heaven-searching Athens into the Roman language of the market place and courts of law. And thus, in conscious con-

trast to medieval Christianity, life now had a meaning to the humanist expressly insofar as the dualism of sensual reality and ideal spirituality was abrogated, and a more consonant unity of the two was effected; not in defiance of God, however, but in recognition of God's transcendent gift to man — reason.

Is it remarkable that in dreams of its own happy childhood and youth, Western culture so frequently turned to the Greco-Arcadian world? It is here that its nostalgia for complete harmony with nature found answer in the perfect bliss life was thought to have been in the halcyon days of a Golden Age. In Greek joyousness, unhampered by the dualism of body and soul, the Occidental believed he had found an almost lost record of his origin; here was the home that was once his, here a goal to bind and hold him. Greek humanity, idyllically conceived, loomed as the truly valid archetype of a happy and perfect existence. The legacy of its noblest representatives came to signify a kind of absolute, a universal, the classical ideal, to which all European cultural nations tied. In this manner Greece became a constructive and enduring force in Western civilization by the side of Christianity.

Through and in Christianity Greco-Roman antiquity had become embedded in European culture. The brilliant worldling Augustine was brought to God by Cicero. Through Augustine Petrarch found his way to Plato and Christian Platonism. Throughout the Middle Ages classical antiquity was an influence in the civilizing of the peoples of the West insofar as it was a firm and permanent part of Christianity. Neo-Platonism, Epicureanism, the Stoa, Pythagoras had long been fused with the Christian conception of life in an attempt to synthesize these forces with the transcendental system of the Middle Ages. This attempt led either to a rationalization of the Christian attitude, to a new mysticism, or to scepticism which rejected the supernatural, the miracle, asceticism, and eschatology. Classical philosophy, however, did not assert itself as, nor was it clearly defined as an independent interpretation of life. Only with the Renaissance and the Reformation was it raised from a subconscious state to a conscious one. In the process of becoming an emancipated force, Greek philosophy detached itself from Christianity, and became a pillar of culture beside Christianity. But with the separation of the two, and a disengaged and

unambiguous analysis of the meaning of each, a tension arose between the powerful force of classical antiquity and a yet more powerful Christianity.

The humanists' emphasis on learning and on the classical past gave to the seeker striving for freedom a confidence in his own faculties. The knowledge of what man had thought and felt and done in ages when Christianity was not, exalted his self-esteem, and led to the discovery that human nature is identical, no matter of what age or creed. The masterworks in art, literature, philosophy gave impetus to emulation. This revival of learning urged to inquiry and bestowed a confidence in criticism, it aided in the emergence from medieval orthodoxy and feudal despotism. It did not mean a return in fact to the irrevocable pagan past, nor did it mean an abrupt break with the Middle Ages. It was however an introduction to the modern world in that it began to reexamine whatever was original in medieval ideas by the light of classical arts and letters.

The humanist was acutely aware of the dignity of man as a rational, volitional, sentient being; he was certain that man is born into this world that he may use it and enjoy it. He rejected the concept of eternal life after death as the only reality; he believed in the goodness and power of man and nature. This world is a place to live in, to act in, and its problems need to be solved. The humanist dreamed of an aristocracy of *humanitas*, which would be inspired by wordly ethics and aesthetics and build life upon a rationalized, not anti-Christian or pagan, but on a religiously indifferent *virtus*. Not only ought he to emulate, he ought to exceed the ancients in excellence.

The humanists, through their influence as tutors, professors, courtiers, and orators, effected a change in social manners, now permeated by the new ideal of culture. To be a gentleman in Italy in the sixteenth century required acquaintanceship with the rudiments at least of the new learning; it required refinement in diction and a nicety of speech, an appreciation of the beauty of the arts, and a conduct modeled after the great men of antiquity rather than after the saints of the Church.

While Italy was consciously and fervently committed to culture, the rest of Europe was still relatively barbarous. But even in

Italy this brilliant social culture did not insure against gross appetites and savage passions, for medieval piety, now scorned, could exercise no restraint. This century of Italian Renaissance and Humanism, in its mundane neopaganism, untutored by the experience of centuries, conspicuous by its literary, artistic, and courtly refinement, knew no moderation in brutality, lust, poisonings, violence, moral corruption, vanity, and estrangement from the people. The people did not reject traditional transcendentalism. Even among the humanists many had no thought of consciously renouncing the Christian religion and the Church. Rather did the Italian Renaissance attempt to Christianize ancient pagan art by using it for the embellishment of cathedral and palace. The people on the whole continued to take joy in display and parade, in worship at the shrine of a miracle or in a dogma hardly grasped.

The Popes of the Renaissance and Humanism

Even the Church did not escape the disruptive influence of the Renaissance. A succession of worldly pontiffs endorsed a flagrant abuse of Christian precepts. Christian virtues were made objects of ridicule, while the ancient virtues furnished themes for elegant rhetoric. The Church openly encouraged a pseudo-pagan ideal of life, unaware or unconcerned that it was violating its own principles of existence. It pursued the policy of aggrandizement as a secular state, and certain of its prelates outraged Christendom by their acts and utterances.

Since the middle of the fifteenth century, Rome had been in the throes of the Renaissance. The secularism of the heritage of ancient art and thought gave impulse to the beautification of the papal palaces and largely determined the manner of life at the papal court. The great among Italian poets, sculptors, painters, and architects graced the new epoch. But the ubiquity of license, envy, boundless ambition, and assassinations cast dark shadows upon a period so extraordinary in its creative achievement. The fact that in this period secular princes were often named bishops, cardinals, and hence elevated to the pontificate, and that influence, family relationships, political craftiness, rather than high character and outstanding religious attainments frequently assured enthronement in the Chair of St. Peter, may be mentioned as an ex-

planation, but not as an excuse for the moral and political improbity of many of the pontiffs.

Pope Alexander VI, Rodrigo Borgia, 1492-1503, of abandoned morals, attained to the acme of corruption among the secular popes of the Renaissance. His ambition was family aggrandizement. Nepotism flourished, one scandal followed hard upon the other. Though the accounts of his murders, poisonings, and immoralities may be exaggerated, there is little doubt that his greed for money and his essentially vicious nature incited him to many heinous crimes. Under this Spanish pope the secularization of the Church was carried to an extreme that wholly belied its religious purposes. Alexander regarded the Church as an instrument for his own designs and stratagems. The monk and priest Savonarola violently attacked his regime, unmindful of the doctrine of the Church that sinful and culpable life of superiors (and this certainly includes the pope) is not competent to abolish or revoke their authority and jurisdiction. The execution of Savonarola in 1498 freed Alexander from a religious zealot and formidable critic. In keeping with the Renaissance spirit, however, Alexander was a patron of the arts, and under him the new High Renaissance era of architectural construction and embellishment made possible by the genius of Bramante, Raphael, and Michelangelo began in Rome. Sensitive to the most exquisite in works of art, this representative of the Christian Church, Pope Alexander VI, one of the Borgias, a family steeped in vice and crime, emerged as the initiator of the Sistine Chapel.

Julian II, Giuliano della Rovere, 1503-1513, a capacious and headstrong spirit, on fire with great enterprises, courageous and of extraordinary acumen, was determined to revive world-dominion for the papacy by establishing first of all the independence of the Holy See on the basis of territorial sovereignty. That meant that the papal state reduced to chaos by the Borgias be liberated from the power of France by the expulsion of the French "barbarians" from Italy. Endowed with a discriminating instinct for beauty, Julian gave new lustre to the papal maecenate in the domain of art. Like Alexander, he also employed the genius of the three great artists of his time. Bramante drew the plans for the reconstruction of the Vatican and for the Cathedral of St. Peter,

whose foundation stone was laid in 1506. In 1626 Urban VIII could consecrate the completed cathedral. Julian further inaugurated the collection of ancient statues in the Belvedere and engaged Michelangelo to paint the Sistine Chapel — one of the truly stupendous works of art brought forth by man. Simultaneously the Pope commissioned Raphael to decorate the Vatican with frescoes glorifying the Church and the papacy. In order to replenish the papal treasury, Julian resorted to the objectionable means of simony and traffic in Indulgences. His temporal policies, implemented by almost continuous wars, occupied his attention and interest far more than did spiritual affairs. It was a common saying in Germany that Julian ought to be the emperor and Maximilian the pope.

The next pope, Leo X, 1513-1521, Giovanni, second son of Lorenzo de' Medici the Magnificent, accorded the High Renaissance in Rome continued stimulus. The new pope raised the Church to a high position as patron of the arts by extension of the bounds of knowledge and further refinement and adornment of life. He made Rome, the ostensible center of Christianity, into the actual center of culture, though it appears that brilliance of culture was often erroneously ascribed to little more than dazzling pageantry. Nonetheless Leo must be granted the indefeasible right to a share in the fame of the Renaissance papacy as an effective cultural and civilizing instrumentality. Leo's interest in art and literature, his generosity, his practice of nepotism, his political ambitions, and his immoderate personal luxury, soon exhausted the savings of Julian II. A financial crisis ensued which became the direct cause of the many calamities of his pontificate. Cultivated, a master of political finesse, insatiable in his love of pleasure, he failed to recognize the spiritual needs of the hour, or to sense the urgency of the pressing demands for reform in the Church. Thus the rule of the first Medicean pope, glorying in the profuse display of talent and enlightenment, and proudly exultant in the exuberant panegyrics of its poets and humanists, by its devoted fidelity to a purely secular bent and its general neglect of the Church, proved disastrous for the See of St. Peter.

Adrian VI, Adrian Dedel, 1521-1523, born at Utrecht in the Netherlands, pupil of the Brethren of the Common Life, grew up

in an atmosphere sharply in contrast with that which surrounded the Italian popes and cardinals in their youth. Adrian entered upon the lonely path of a reformer. Though he was sincere in his efforts against the abuses in the Church, he was hampered by his Renaissance cardinals, who regarded him as a "barbarian" from the North and a pedantic professor unresponsive to the beauty of classical antiquity. Adrian did not understand the gravity of the Protestant revolt in Germany; but it stands to his credit that he did instruct his nuncio to the Diet at Nürnberg to confess to the guilt of the Curia and admit the need for reform. But deeply imbued with the spiritual heritage of the Church, he strongly opposed any doctrinal changes and demanded that Luther be punished for heresy.

The succeeding pope, Clement VII, Giulio de' Medici, 1524-1534, crafty, conscienceless, prodded by pettiness and irresolution, was the least capable of the popes of the time by reason of narrowness in outlook and interests. He failed to appreciate the forces of the spiritual movement convulsing the Church. From the very beginning of his pontificate, he made the cause of the Roman Church subordinate to his personal endeavors as an Italian prince and a Medici. He delegated to Emperor Charles V the task of arresting the progress of the Reformation in Germany and sedulously evaded Charles' demands for the convocation of a General Council, for which Luther and his age so persistently asked.

The turning point in the history of the papacy came during the pontificate of the next pope, Paul III, Alessandro Farnese, 1534-1549. The steady growth of Protestantism, the preponderant power of Emperor Charles V, the threatening advance of the Turks, the uncertain mind of the Church itself, all these matters presented a problem too complicated for the shrewd and calculating, but too often hesitant, Pope. Like his Renaissance predecessors, Paul was a lover and patron of art. He began the famous Farnese Palace and commissioned Michelangelo to paint the "Last Judgment" in the Sistine Chapel and to resume work upon St. Peter's.

In the struggle for freedom of conscience and natural human rights two important pronouncements within the Church in the first half of the century ought not to be overlooked. The young Dominican Bartolomeo Las Casas, having witnessed the crimes against the Indians in Mexico, was among the first to intercede

for them. In 1519 he addressed Charles V in Madrid with the words: "Our religion applies to all nations of the world and deprives no man of his natural freedom."³ Since there were those who in the interest of exploitation, or indeed from sincere conviction, declared the Indians to be of a rank with the animals, Paul III defined their status in the bull *Sublimis Deus*, issued in 1537. His words are clear: "In His love Almighty God created man in such manner that like all creatures he is to a certain degree good and lovely and perfect; but beyond that He granted him the great privilege of approaching God, who is perfection itself, and beholding Him face to face. This life in eternal bliss, which according to Holy Scriptures is our destiny, is attainable only through faith in Christ Jesus. Man therefore, in order to fulfill his destiny, must necessarily possess a natural capacity for this faith, and thus everyone who is man by nature, must also by nature be receptive to this faith. . . . Whether the Indians or any other races . . . are Christians or not, they are free, and may not, either now or in future, be deprived of their possessions and their freedom. Rather are they to enjoy their possessions and their freedom fully and freely and they may not be made slaves."³

Despite these moments of remarkable insight and activity on behalf of the tenets of Christianity, Paul III was on the whole too worldly-minded, too fond of luxury, to face the spiritual needs of the Church. He did, however, take one step toward reform by the appointment of a commission to report upon existing evils in the Church and their remedy. The feeling was general, that an equitable and spiritual solution to the many problems arising from the forces released by Luther, the monk of Wittenberg, and to the many problems arising from the corruption in the Church, needed urgently to be found by the convening of a General Council. Instead however, Paul III, by approving the Society of the Jesuits in 1540, by introducing the Inquisition into Italy in 1542, and by establishing censorship and the Index in 1543, set on foot efficient forces for combatting heresy, and therewith gave impetus to the restoration of the absolutism of the Roman Church. But he could not still the mighty movement of the Reformation. The Council of Trent, assembly of prelates and theologians for the purpose of regulating matters of doctrine and discipline in the Church, finally

convoked in 1545, proved ineffectual in all important issues at stake. The actual reform within the Church effectively undertaken in the second half of the century, was not the work of Paul III.

Emancipation of the State in Italy and England

MACHIAVELLI

For the purpose of exemplifying the many-sidedness, the diversity, the mutual antagonisms of the forces abroad in Europe in this Renaissance Age, a few representative humanists outside Germany are briefly reviewed here.

The High Renaissance made Italy the leading cultural power in Europe. The theocentric universe of the Middle Ages made way for an anthropocentric world view. In the cities Roman jurisprudence and philosophy gradually supplanted the ecclesiastical tradition of the Church. In conscious imitation of the "polis" of antiquity, the Italian city-state aspired to integration of all aspects of public and private life in the state, to coordination of the purposes of life with the purposes of the state. The Epicurean concept of the state as founded on contract and transmitted by Cicero was revived. Therewith the precise division of the three estates of the Middle Ages, the lords temporal or aristocracy, the lords spiritual or clergy, and the commons, was by degrees obliterated before the rise of the townsman with his democracy, his intellectual and artistic culture, and his capitalism. All of the intentions and designs in the secularization of life in Italy tied in an unbroken line to the cultural heritage from antiquity. And as soon as this legacy, understood and outwardly received, was translated into inner acceptance and assent, the secularization of the state could be accomplished, even as an aesthetically and ethically autonomous personality could develop.

In Renaissance Italy then the state freed itself in fact and in theory from the domination of the Roman Church and became wholly secularized. The works of the critic and philosopher Nicolo Machiavelli, 1469-1527, accelerated this liberation already in progress in Italy and in Europe. Unscrupulously, rigorously, he applied the scientific method of writing the history of a people first of all on the basis of fixed principles, and secondly under the direction of an artistic feeling for personal and dramatic events. The

predisposition to violence and coercive unity which characterized the fifteenth century and continued as a disruptive force throughout the sixteenth, persisted in him. Yet Machiavelli belonged essentially to the Renaissance which shattered collectivistic concepts, resolved experience into component parts, and set free from fetters. In inner disjunction Machiavelli oscillated between the bound and the released, unity and freedom, state and individual, force and independence, absolutism and the republic. He admired the classical Roman statesmen as well as the austerity of the Roman state, and he insisted that the maintenance of the state required that all things be sacrificed and surrendered to it: army, law, religion. He professed a predilection for the strong state of distinguished men, for a state is great only through its great citizens, and these great men may quite conceivably and acceptably outgrow the state and become despots.

Out of despair over the Renaissance chaos of his age, Machiavelli turned from the kingdom of Christianity of the Middle Ages, from the Caesar-Augustus cult which believed Augustus to have ended paganism upon command of the Lord, away from the hoped-for religious, ecclesiastical, worldly union ethically obligated to the Eternal One, away from the religiously animated *Imperium Romanum*, *pax Christiana*, *iustitia*, *ordo* as the basis for customs, morals, and law of the world. In place of these he projected his idol, a national state resolutely active in the interest of its own power. Should the nation be morally decadent as was the case in Italy, and especially in Machiavelli's Florence, sovereignty had but the one duty: to convert chaos into the orderliness of a state, even though this same orderly state would in time revert to chaos. Machiavelli recognized the values inherent in justice, ethics, or religion as such, and he believed that a republic is in principle the best form of state; nonetheless he was convinced that an era of depravity and decline, such as that in which he lived, needed a lawfully governing monarchy, presided over in this exceptional case by a prince not obligated by the principles of justice and moral

It is well to note that the realist Machiavelli did not pretend to advise how one should live, but rather, how a ruler must live if he would not be destroyed by the unscrupulous perversity that is

ingrained in mankind. His program for the prince was: ruthless aggression in the exploitation of the opportunities at hand, and, it is better to be impetuous than considerate. But discretion is not to be discarded in this ruthlessness; the ruler must be a fox to avoid the snares set for him, he must be a lion to frighten the wolves. Neither may he keep his word if it is disadvantageous to do so. That the state may continue to exist, the prince must often transgress against mercy, humanity, religion; however, he must be careful to utter words that convey mildness, loyalty, sincerity, and piety only; he must seem to possess these virtues; but to possess them actually and to practice them would be dangerous. Like the old Sophists he believed that to seem good is more expedient than to be good.

Machiavelli regarded men as malicious, enduringly disposed to evil, always the same and unable to change, and for that reason laws are required to "make them good." The state requires good men primarily in the sense of courageous men, and since there are but few of these, education is desirable, mainly to train in military proficiency. Good laws and an able, armed force are fundamental to the existence of any state, and good laws can exist only where there is strong military power. Right and wrong are determined by their relationship to this order. Warfare essentially maintains the state, for it prohibits leisure, idleness, disintegration in man, who is but a natural force, a living energy. It is the task of the state to prevent man's rapid degeneracy by enforced activity, by inculcation of bravery and a consciousness of justice and peace. Law and religion, preferably the old Roman religion, are the best suited means for the accomplishment of this end.

Religion, sprung from fear, may be used as a disciplinary instrument by clever statesmen in uniting the people and in commanding the armies. The state may well sacrifice the Christian religion with its ideal of humility, its great disdain of earthly matters, its asceticism, and world-flight in favor of a pagan-antique religiosity, which produced greatness of mind and fitness of body. Machiavelli's preference for the ancient Roman religion may be the better judged if it is borne in mind that Machiavelli, vigilant and keenly aware, noted the fact that Pope Sixtus IV was using the monies obtained from the sale of spiritual grace and dignity

for waging war on behalf of papal secular aggrandizement. He saw Innocent VIII promote plunder and theft in the ecclesiastical state; he knew that upon payment of a definite tax pardon for almost any crime could be bought. He experienced the reign of terror of Alexander VI and his son, Cesare Borgia, who ruled his father by employment of diabolical gifts and purposes. He knew that the Pope was accused of encouraging the cardinals in their acquisition of possessions and wealth so that they might be removed from the scene and he inherit their riches.

In view then of the venality and scandal at home in the Church he scrutinized, in view of his faculty for sharp and penetrating observation, in view of the fact further that the Roman Curia, with whose activities he was so thoroughly acquainted, was, according to his analysis, not only the cause of the Italian misfortune, but also the source of Italian depravity; in view of all this, Machiavelli would hardly suggest that ethical consciousness and development be achieved by way of the Church. "The nearer Rome the more corrupt and the less religious," was his opinion and dogmatic assertion. The intent of religion was, as Machiavelli understood it, that it strengthen morals, honesty, loyalty, so necessary for the functioning of the state.

The old Roman will to power was revived in Machiavelli, the will to sovereignty, designed to subjugate to its imperial resoluteness all culture, religion, learning, and life for the sake of law and order, for the sake of organizing, securing, and preserving the intent of life: utility and enjoyment. Machiavelli, the teacher of the later Hobbes, extolled the ideal of the emperor on Italian soil where the will to rule had so long prevailed: in the Roman Republic, in the Imperium, in the papacy. For he was certain that the only creative capability man possesses is to rule, is the genius to political activity, this assiduity of a positive imagination dealing with facts.

To be sure, the ideal form of government was the republic, the ancient Roman Republic, or city-state, in which each, prince, aristocracy, and democracy, guarded against the usurpation of complete power by the other. However, the turmoil of an age may require the despotism of men strong enough to create order out of chaos. When after the French invasion Machiavelli reflected

upon the disunity of Italy, the power of the foreigner within her boundaries, and the perfidy abroad in his country, it seemed that violence and force, the suspension of all moral principles alone could build a secure national monarchy. A republic for Florence, for Italian unity an Italian state: a monarchy even though won by means so familiar to his contemporary, Cesare Borgia. In the day of frightful dissolution, Machiavelli sought to establish a united Italy through a federation of authoritarian states.

An opportunist and egoist, friendly and sanguine, he would use immoral and realistic means to achieve ideal aims and ends. He would drive to action without regard to the morals involved, for with Boccaccio he thought it better to do and regret than to regret sluggish and supine inertia. Free and freed from any static or traditional precept he would have man act in the real, singular, momentary present, for personality develops in time and through events that come but once. As nature frees herself through an interchange of good and evil, so must man. Man is not evil by nature, but his passions and predisposition make him so; curb these evil passions through the restraint of state-imposed laws, regenerate the old and the outworn by new regulations, that is, by political force, and a lawful order will evolve. This order, derived from without, is not built from within as the inevitable structure of faith and conscience, for Machiavelli's works do not know the meaning of religious inwardness. Mechanistically he conceived of the causes of the rise and fall of states, pessimistically he viewed the motives of human action and denied all metaphysical involvement either in the eternal tragedy of man or in the demonian nature of power. His secularized state, endowed with political heroism, was the prerequisite for freedom. Machiavellianism subscribes to the theory that where it is a question of the welfare of the state, there should be no scruple as to the employment of means either just or unjust, mild or ruthless, infamous or commendable; that, aside from all other considerations, any means that will preserve the continuance and freedom of the state must be adopted.

Princes and statesmen responded to Machiavelli's insinuating logic. Poets were swayed by his masterly exposition. His influence was active in English tragedy, most pointedly in Shakespeare's *Richard III*. But the persuasions uttered in *The Prince*, 1515, had

long been an effectual force in European affairs. For the birthplace of the modern political power state was not Italy, but Western Europe. In France, in England it was in process of growing organically out of late feudalism. Machiavellian principles and methods had been and continued potent in the trend toward absolutism in the state, which came to claim secular sovereignty without restriction in authority or rule. And it inevitably follows that the unconditioned sovereignty of the prince, or of the state, put an end to the sovereignty of the Renaissance personality. As the state became absolute, man lost his sovereignty and independence.

Machiavelli's urge toward absolutism found a co-worker in the Spanish Loyola, the founder of the Order of the Jesuits. Machiavelli destroyed the political individualism of the Renaissance, Loyola the religious individualism of the Reformation. The former demanded the establishment of the absolute authority of the state. The latter the absolute authority of the Church. Absolutism and totalism were active in the Counter-Renaissance and in the Counter-Reformation, movements gathering strength during the second half of the century.

It is Machiavelli's distinction that he analysed man as a political being and that he analyzed constitutions and classified governments. He studied the motives underlying public action, and he surveyed analytically the secrets of success and the causes of failure in the conduct of political affairs. And he drew conclusions. He arrived at conclusions sinister, terrifying. But his *Il Principe* did add a new category to the realm of intellectual examination.

Still, political science was not a science to him, but rather the adeptness of historical action in response to the demands of the hour. Thus, despite the graphic characterization of important personalities, despite his insight into historical convictions, despite the expert intertwining of the inner and the outer in the history of Florence, this theoretician lacked at bottom all feeling for historical development. His conscious omission of ethics, religion, and the Christian revelation and the reference of the significance of these to man's initial impulse to power indicates that he was highly deficient in the art of historically evaluating experiences of extrarational character. His arbitrary manner of approach preempted historical material to serve as the pragmatic subject matter for his

theory of political authority. Machiavelli transmitted to the historian a manner and principle of recording history. Yet, however great the intellectual influence which this Florentine exerted for centuries, however great the obeisance accorded the dynamisms of his teaching, the deification of the state, his martial spirit, and his totally secularized state, posterity could not accept his *Prince* as a model either for the statesman or for the historian.

SIR THOMAS MORE

Whereas Machiavelli presented a political world from the point of view of the realist, amoralist, and empiricist, Sir Thomas More, 1478-1535, the English socialist, idealist, and moralist gave his life for the sake of his faith in the Roman Church. His romance, *Utopia*, 1516, the "Nowhere" of his day, describes an imaginary island, the home of a perfect social and political system. Thomas More also drew on the fifteenth century, and like Machiavelli failed as Chancellor of State, and like him prepared his program for the organization of the state in seclusion, far removed from the distractions of the day. Despotism, religious intolerance, the wretchedness of the lower classes gave rise to his imagined state which was grounded on "justice," "reason," "liberty." A comprehensive socialist program granted to each individual the right to seek his own happiness, to choose his religion unhampered by Church or state. The inhabitants of *Utopia* were to be governed by popular election, have community of goods and wealth, meals in common, monogamy, freedom of creed. The use of money was forbidden. In this peaceful, communistic community, based on a natural economy, slavery was permitted. War too, if it became necessary to protect the boundaries or to help endangered friends. Or, if other means failed, war might be resorted to in the conquest of new land for the purposes of colonization, should the territory be barred to those who according to nature's will were destined to inherit it.

Inconsistencies and compromise are no rarity in this *Utopia*. Religious intolerance must be exterminated, and yet those who do not confess the truths of a rational religion, including belief in the immortality of the soul, reward and punishment in the beyond, the existence of God and His providence, are excluded from all

political offices. This state needs few laws and few scholars of law. However, it appears that Thomas More construed his conception of law and justice as analogous to English national interests. The pacific welfare state of the Utopians turns out upon closer examination to be a political power of the first order.

With Erasmus, whose friend he was, More was convinced that human unhappiness springs from ignorance, that education alone can eliminate it. For happiness is found chiefly in the acceptance of a kind of religious, universalistic theism, which recognizes that natural laws are likewise the laws of Him who sustains man in faith, which recognizes further that religiosity lies not in religious observance, but in the honest performance of daily tasks.

Sir Thomas More's uprightness of character, his humanistic enlightenment which exceeded by far the most statesmanlike ideas to be found among his English contemporaries, his superiority of view, his optimistic though impracticable ideals of reform were too Utopian for the England in which he lived. He was hurried to the block, charged with treason by the Act of Supremacy, passed by Parliament at the behest of Henry VIII. This Act made Henry, the former "Defender of the [Roman] faith," the "Only Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England." More preferred death to acquiescence in this high-handed measure, this denial of papal supremacy, this defection from the one holy Church.

Humanism in Italy and France

GIORDANO BRUNO

The last half of the century saw the absolutism of the Roman Church attacked in the two countries where it was most securely at home: in Italy and in France. In Italy Giordano Bruno, 1549-1600, appears to have been delegated, as it were, by the Renaissance itself to be the exemplar of its final consummation. He typifies the sixteenth century. Beyond that he struck notes reverberant of the fifteenth and he preluded the seventeenth in his homage to a unifying God. As he turned to the Absolute, to the Oneness of all differentiation, Bruno stood on the threshold of the Baroque era.

Bruno, the monk reborn and reawakened, having imbibed of the splendor, the restlessness, the insurgence of his age, was forced

to a pilgrimage through many lands. His knowledge, his remarkable memory, his verse, his scintillating wit and his Renaissance feeling for beauty called forth admiration wherever he went. But his unbridled egotism, impetuosity, monkish hatred of his literary critics, his Neapolitan buffoonery evoked as much censure. He appeared as an impassioned disputant at Oxford and Paris. In Geneva Calvinistic Protestantism engaged him until its dictatorial austerity became a weariness to his kindled spirit. In Wittenberg, the home of Luther, he found himself in "the land of freedom." Here he spent two years. Germany was to him the land of the elect; the home of an Albertus Magnus; of a Nicolaus of Cusa, "superior to Pythagoras"; of a Copernicus, who in two chapters, Bruno asserted, showed more spirit and reason in his examination of nature than Aristotle with all his peripatetics; and the home finally of a Paracelsus, "the only equal of Hippocrates." Bruno's farewell address to Wittenberg, "the German Athens," 1588, is evidence that humanistic and religious freedom still prevailed there. Moreover, Bruno looked upon the land of the Reformation as the land of promise: "Grant, O Jupiter, that they may recognize their own strength and turn their diligence toward exalted things, then will they be gods, and not men."⁴ And addressing Luther, who had been active here in the first half of the century: "O Luther, you saw the light, you heard the divine spirit, unarmed you defied the enemy who terrified even kings, and you triumphed through the Word."⁴ This was to be sure no concession to Protestantism, for Bruno rejected all Christian faith.

In Bruno's view the sovereign Renaissance spirit quickens each particle in the world's multiplicity. He beheld infinity disseminated to all ends of the earth, "a oneness carrying and cherishing in its bosom infinite, immeasurable worlds."⁵ This world, thought to be motionless and inflexible, had been released to motion by Copernicus in 1543, by his theory that the earth revolves on its axis, and that the sun is the center of the planets; Bruno unbound it further before his judges, by confessing a faith in "infinitely many worlds"⁶ like our own. He declared the fixed stars to be suns and the sun one of these innumerable stars, scattered in unmeasured space and each surrounded by a similar world of planets. "I believe in an infinite universe, that is, the creation of infinite omnipotence:

I consider it unworthy unto divine goodness and power [to imagine] that it created but one finite, limited world, when it is able to create unnumbered worlds. Therefore I have always maintained that infinitely many worlds similar to this one exist. . . . All of these countless worlds form an infinite total in infinite space and this is called the infinite All; and thus a double infinity is to be assumed, one, according to the magnitude of the universe, the other, according to the number of planets."⁷ This infinite All is maintained by a world-soul, but this is but a trace and a shadow of the Godhead.

This freed world proceeds from an original Oneness, God, who develops, unfolds, streams out into the world's multiformity. "He eternally unfolds the One in inexhaustible number."⁸ All individual differences are but individual forms of the One. The divine soul of the Infinite is present in its wholeness in all its parts, that is, in every individual thing. Each finite object is part of the universe in which the infinite is present, therefore each individual creation is endowed with the beauty, strength, and power of its Cause and Maker. In respect to Substance the whole and its parts are one. For the infinite is of the spirit, and spirit has no parts. This Unity and Oneness, sundering itself into the multiplicity of things, is the "*monas monadum*," and it creates each thing a "*monas*" or a self-existent, living being, a universe in itself. The greatest and smallest elements, the very minima, the monad, the immortal soul, articulate God, the monad of monads, who dwells in the world as beauty dwells in beautiful bodies.

Bruno is often called a representative of pantheistic philosophy and a precursor of Spinoza. But it should be remembered that pantheism is that doctrine which identifies all finite physical and mental existences with the One Substance as its more or less illusory and transient modes or manifestations. Pantheism holds that the self-existent and self-developing universe, conceived as a whole, is God. It contrasts with atheism as the positive denial of the existence of God, and with agnosticism as the dogmatic doubt of it. It opposes that form of deism which rejects divine immanence and separates God from the world. It differs from theism essentially in its doctrine of substance. This pantheistic principle identifies God with the universe. Therefore it looks upon the theistic position

that God as a personal ethical spirit transcends the universe as an untenable theory. In its more materialistic form pantheism either deprives the Divine Being of all personal characteristics whatever, or else reduces them to the terms of dream-like or quasi-animal consciousness. In this form it is scarcely distinguishable from materialism. In its more spiritualistic form it is apt to deny the true personality of man and to reduce all human experience to an illusory fragment of divine reason. And the term reason, as used here, holds no more than impersonal signification. In all pantheistic forms finite existences, including self-conscious and rational beings, are "lost," "finally merged," or "swallowed up" in God.

To call Bruno a pantheist therefore is to misunderstand his theology. In contrast with Scholasticism, whose concept of God was almost too tenuous, Bruno fervently emphasized the immanence of God in things. "There can be no place, fate, age, nor space, which finds me separate from thee, my life; for round about thou unveilest the infinite All, boundless, and the beaming worlds of the holy stars."⁹ God realizes Himself in the infinitely various forms of activity that constitute individual things. By His action was the universe produced. The three attributes of God are "omnipotence, omniscience, all-goodness, or spirit, reason, and love . . . this trinity is above all and in all; no being can be excluded from the divine omnipresence."¹⁰

Together with the Renaissance affirmation of life as expressed in art and poetry came a new relation of man to self, a new concept of the expansion of this self to participation in the universe. In the romantic mysticism of the Middle Ages man had risen from the limitation of his self-centeredness and the doctrine of a separate, sensuous world to oneness with God, to the eternity and unified infinity of God. Bruno, the Renaissance philosopher, widened this conception of the unity with God to the conception of inner vitality, the activity of God as the One unifying Substance in the universe and in each created form. By granting to each individual existence an inner, artistically creative, spiritual energy, Bruno invested the Renaissance epoch with a metaphysical consciousness which carried the infinite and eternal One into nature, man, landscape, human body, and every finite form, in order to endow it with beauty and an own value. This recognition of God in an

infinite universe, this universe His expression, His beauty, His essence in manifestation, inevitably compelled to love of Him, who is its Perfect Cause. And this love constitutes true religion in Bruno's sense.

"God is effective love, charity, and light; nature is the general object of love, is fire and warmth; reason is the loving subject, which is kindled by nature and illumined by God."¹¹ God is found in the inviolable law of nature. He is the "*causa immanens*," and the infinitely possible is the infinitely actual. His action and acting constitutes nature's law, and only in loyalty to His law, which is His necessity, for He can not do otherwise than act in consonance with His own law, is there true freedom. That mind, that spirit is religious which is well-adjusted to this law, which lives, thinks, feels, and rejoices in this All-Good revealed in the glow of the sun, in the beauty of the form of things, in the reflection of the One unfolded in the corporeality and countenance of the unnumbered and varying phenomena of this world. Love of God is the holy spirit in man. "God is in all creatures directly, but all things are not directly in God."¹² The immortal soul of man is a thinking monad standing midway between divine intelligence and the world of external things. The contemplative few, who achieve union with God out of an inner strength, are the born philosophers, artists, and heroes. They alone are men in the true sense.

This is monotheism in contrast both to deism and to pantheism: to that deism, which, though it believes in God and His moral perfections, denies a future state or immortality. Bruno's decided individualism, his teaching of individual immortality strongly opposes the denial of the consciousness and personality of God, which is so marked in pantheism. Pantheism sees the individual as a passing appearance; and this concept is little more than a poetic transfiguration of materialism. In pantheism the personal spirit is immersed in the universal spirit at death. The immortality of the individual soul, however, is basic in Bruno's convictions. "Never will the soul pass away; rather does it exchange its former dwelling with a new home, and in this it lives and acts. All things change, nothing perishes."¹³ Thus he conceived of the individual soul as being substantial form, uncreated and eternal.

Bruno was the predecessor of the idealistic schools, even as the

later Tommaso Campanella, 1568-1639, may be termed the predecessor of Bacon. The writings of Bruno and Campanella consist of a mixture of medieval and modern elements; they are alike in an endeavor to disengage their thinking from classical as well as from ecclesiastical authority. Like the martyr William Tyndale in England, Bruno ended on a funeral pyre in Rome at the turn of the century. And so a last violent act concluded the life of the most genuine philosopher of the Renaissance, born in Italy, come to his death in Italy, the land of avowed beauty and splendor.

MONTAIGNE

In France, where the dominant force of "Roman" centralization in Church, law, and state prohibited an independent and positive objectivization of the High Renaissance, the first half of the century had brought forth the satire of the "drunken philosopher," as Voltaire called Rabelais, 1495-1553. This great encyclopaedic jester of France, unique in world literature, intoxicated with the lusty haleness, the dart and dash of life, claimed man's right to laughter and presented a complete wordbook of the grossness of man in a gross situation. His gigantic humor stopped short of no excess, however banal or indecorous. And yet, although Rabelais adopted the manner of the fabliaux so popular in early French literature, a genre hardly to be outdone in point of coarseness, the naturalism of his extreme license did not descend to that corruption of refined sensuality and indecency which does little honor, for instance, to a Voltaire.

Though Rabelais and the Collège de France, founded in 1530, had already given validity to the new era in France, it was actually only in the second half of the century that French Humanism assumed leadership. Rabelais' expansiveness found its cultivated counterpart in the cool classicism of Michel de Montaigne, 1533-1592, whose *Essays* began appearing in 1580. These short disquisitions, called essays, became influential in Western literature as much on account of their form as by reason of their manner of thought. Whereas Rabelais embodied the rising spirit, the pleasure of living, the "*Fais ce que voudras*" of the earlier Renaissance, Montaigne now represented its later disillusionment — a disillusionment turned to scepticism and inclined to muse on the vanity

of life. This sceptic abominated mathematical rules and numbers, he ridiculed Copernicus, and neither Plato nor Aristotle appealed to him. But Socrates, the father of all enlightenment, attracted a Montaigne who anticipated the eighteenth century Age of Reason.

To be sure, Montaigne's scepticism is not exclusively negative, nor is his gentle irony satiric. His goal was to increase man's knowledge concerning his own nature, to analyse man as man wholly detached from the metaphysical dogma of the Church. He based his study upon the foundation of ancient morals to be found in Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, the Stoics, upon Renaissance collections of axioms, as well as upon the humanistic temper of his time. In Socrates he found that the way to truth, justice, humanity lies in obedience to the natural, moral law of the universe. Virtue is active in nature, in man. Man is the center of ethical decision and action. Nature's moral law is not found in abstractions. Joy and self-preservation are her driving forces. Montaigne therefore proclaimed that it is best to live without passion and to die without fear, even as nature does. Let man destroy deceptive passions which but destroy him and seek to set himself free from the fear of death.

Ethical conduct demands the discipline of the natural impulses. Natural inclinations are not to be robbed of their prerogatives, for virtue is of pleasant and cheerful disposition. This countered the ascetic conception of virtue, which considered the annihilation of natural desires a merit and counseled continence. Montaigne's teaching is of pagan color and therefore inculcates moderation. He adjudged happiness to depend upon the satisfaction and tranquillity of a well-trained mind, and upon the preservation of a disciplined emotional life.

Pascal's succinct summary of Montaigne's argument holds the view that Montaigne preferred not to say, "I do not know," and therefore asked, "What do I know?" The answer led to scepticism. However, Montaigne's doubt was in fact a practical doubt rather than a philosophic conclusion. His observation of self, his experience in life, his disposition combined to support an ingrained indecision. It was plain to him that though one point of view might be valid its opposite might also be true. Attentive to the eternal antithesis dominating life, he diligently pursued life's amiable grotesquery, which, though not inspiring, did hold him by its agree-

able charm. As Montaigne developed, his thinking became ever more sharply identified with a "philosophy of the moment." Pleased with one idea, he capitulated directly, in an instant however he turned to another, submitting to each with graceful expression and lively sympathy. He was thus loyal to none. He vacillated between reason and faith, indulgence and renunciation, pessimism and joyous hope.

His delight in ephemeral truth was accompanied by the acceptance of an easy virtue, which betook itself to gayety in fair meadows. But not for long. The uncontrolled whirl of libertinism in the end viewed its own profligacy with dismay. He found that truths, morals, values are of many and diverse kinds, more changeable than the tide in the maelstrom of error, presumption, contradiction, morbid intemperance, and unbridled passion surgent in man. Also, the greater the aggregate of new ideas, or the greater the number of reforms, the more widespread is moral turpitude. Nonetheless he demanded a code of morals, and like Machiavelli, insisted that laws be obeyed because they are laws. To escape being submerged in the endless fluctuations of his own soul, Montaigne finally turned to orthodoxy, and defended it, whether he believed in it or not.

Montaigne's philosophy was a mixture of moral and historical fact. Metaphysical truths were excluded from his reflections, metaphysical doubt was not his concern. Its petition must be addressed to a higher authority and answer sought not from Stoic virtue but from the Christian religion. Having composed himself in the Roman faith, he could not regard as harmful to him any doubt he might entertain with respect to the capacity of reason to grasp speculative truths. His scepticism dealt with questions of practical wisdom and stemmed from pagan philosophy. Seeking peace and balance in the realm of opinions concerned with material rather than purely ideal considerations, he finally arrived at the view that reason is incapable of a universally valid conclusion. Its counsel however is moderation, patience. Montaigne's doubt did not arise from a great and heroic struggle. It did not encounter tribulation nor did it know intense suffering. It was simply a clear recognition of the basic condition of human existence.

His philosophy was not new, his own experiences not extensive,

and his observations none too profound. The originality of his presentation lay in the fact that his singularly clear intellect was blended with buoyant sensibilities. Though Montaigne leaned heavily upon the ancients, the total wealth of his material and the more delicate modulations of his temper and temperament projected him beyond these. His *Essays* revived a valuable heritage from antiquity: the view which grants human beings authenticity as human beings and renders them morally autonomous.

This philosophic individualist devoted his life to the study of himself. He offered no excuses, he exacted no empyreal aspirations. In his quiet ironic way he sloughed off all traditional, external restraint and carefully veiled his scepticism regarding all things absolute. Among other things he helped to create the conception of the *honnête homme*, man civilized enough to be aware of standards — the standard of good taste. In the end he came to respect religion and to accept the Church as a safeguard, a solid bulwark and authority. Montaigne, the sceptic, analyst, psychologist, critic of all systems and views, precursor of unnumbered rationalists, ultimately sought sanctuary in the most authoritative of Churches. Having exhausted the worldliness of the century and having found no stay in it, he withdrew to this haven of law and order.

CHAPTER II

RENAISSANCE—HUMANISM
IN GERMANY

THE HAPSBURG RULERS OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE OF THE GERMAN NATION IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Lingering medieval forces as well as the claim of modern individual freedom distracted the German emperors and prohibited any activation of nationalistically inclined statecraft. Emperor Maximilian I, 1493-1519, through his mother, Leonore of Portugal, of Romance blood, through his father, Frederick V (III), of German lineage, was the puppet head of the German federal state known as the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. The Emperor and the Diet, the legislative body of the Empire, constituted the Imperial government. The Empire was composed of a loosely organized body of about three hundred so-called "estates" in Germany and Austria, survivals of the medieval feudal realm, in the hands of princes, margraves, counts, prince-bishops, and free cities. Some of these, like the "Electors" — three ecclesiastical dignitaries and four lay princes, who theoretically chose the Emperor — held territories large enough to make them virtually independent of the central power. The sovereignty of others extended at most over a few square miles.

Maximilian's international realm presented a disjointed, incomplete nation, whose geographic position invited attack on all fronts. When he determined to implement ancient imperial claims in Italy, he suffered defeat and derision. His endeavor to unite Europe against the Turks advancing up the Danube failed to stir even his own Germans to a war of defense. Matrimonial alliances compensated for failures elsewhere by adding provinces to the House of Hapsburg: the Netherlands by his marriage in 1477 to Mary of Burgundy, daughter of Charles the Bold; the crown of Spain in 1496, when his son Philip married Joan of Castile, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. This perfected the Spanish-Burgundian-Austrian ties, a concentration of extraordinary power in the hands of the House of Hapsburg.

Maximilian, a strange mixture of medieval and modern elements, harked back to the glories of feudalism and called himself "the Last Knight." Buoyed by the great stream of enlightenment, he invited to his court scholars and poets and himself participated in musical and literary activity. This last knight was also the first Renaissance prince in Germany. That is to say, in a limited way he possessed the characteristics of the *uomo universale*. Heir apparent to Burgundy and Lombardy, he was acquainted with the culture of both, and he combined in himself the dying Burgundian ideal of Christian chivalry, humanistic influences, a romantic yearning for the heroic saga and epic of the German past, and a strong nationalistic pride. His humor and his romanticism were German and endeared him to his people. The burgher class had by this time developed an upper stratum which practiced social refinements and participated in the cultivation of letters and sciences. Maximilian was at home with the patricians of the prosperous city of Augsburg. He took counsel with the learned among them, however humble the origin of many of them might be.

Maximilian's misfortune lay in the diversity of his talents. A restless, spasmodic imperialist and realist, a poet and mysticist, a patron of the arts and disposed to aesthetic enjoyment, he nonetheless steered the Hapsburg monarchy toward its later status as a world power. The hope of the German people that he might re-establish a Christian universal Empire was not fulfilled. But he awakened enthusiasm in Germany and spurred her people to a will to enter upon an epoch decisive in spiritual and political development. A man of fantasy, of many ideas and projects, Maximilian began much but finished little.

His grandson Charles V, 1519-1556, heir to Austria, Burgundy, Castile, and Aragon, with all their dependencies, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and Spanish America, was elected to the crown of the Holy Roman Empire in 1519. However, all of these diverse parts continued as separate entities, so that his power and glory cast but a pale lustre, and whatever grandeur was his can not be identified with any single nation. It may be that the sun "never set" in his vast realm, as Charles proudly claimed, but neither did it ever really rise.

Distinguished outwardly by elegance in appearance, by a man-

ner cool, at times icily remote, by a dignity built on self-discipline, self-assurance, and perfect poise, Charles was inwardly prodded by a deep sense of honor and an acute awareness of a duty divinely imposed. He lacked the qualities that made for the boldness, defiance, joyousness, flexibility of his Burgundian forebears. He was weighed down with melancholy and gravity, a legacy probably inherited from his mother, Joan of Castile, whose mental illness in her later years left its imprint upon him and future Hapsburg generations.

Charles was brought up in the Netherlands, where, it was hoped, the Germanic and Romance elements in him might be properly balanced and he be prepared for his imperial duties. His tutor, Adrian of Utrecht, later Pope Adrian VI, instilled the virtues of piety, charity, and a faith active in good works. When Charles washed the feet of twelve beggar boys in the presence of the Diet at Worms in 1521, devoutness was doing homage to the twelve disciples of Christ.

The bearer of a heritage of two generations of German, Portuguese, Spanish, and French Burgundian culture could naturally not belong to any one nation. Devotion to the splendor and eminence of his House on the one hand, and the will to the preservation of the Roman faith on the other were to his mind enjoined both by his office and by his responsibility before God and history. The Emperor was the supreme secular officer of the Church. As such, Charles was filled with the inspiration of his holy and universal mission: to resuscitate the idea of the Holy Roman Empire, to establish the Christian sovereignty expected for centuries, to make Augustine's *City of God* a reality in his reign, to be the answer to the Caesar-Augustus cult brought to culminal expression in Dante and Boniface VIII.

His mission thus had a dual goal: to establish and perpetuate one universal political empire, and one universal religion, that is, the unity of Europe and the unity of Christianity. These exalted ideals were intertwined with secular and hierarchical opposition. Charles considered himself the protector of the faith, and in fact he was more Christian, more Roman Catholic, more pious than most of the popes of his day, more active by far in the maintenance of the unity of the Church than were they, yet his political con-

siderations bowed to secular-dynastic ambitions. Despite all religious fervor, the Burgundian knight in him was more assertive than was the Spanish fighter for the faith.

His realm extended from the shores of the Atlantic to the eastern bounds of European culture. It sent representatives and missionaries carrying the Christian confession into the unbounded vastness of America and to the Pacific Ocean, while at home its fleet thwarted the threatened formation of a Mohammedan pirate state in North Africa. The armies of Charles V stopped the on-march of the Asiatic enemies from the Near East. His religion concerned itself with all nations and colors of men, and would deprive no man of his "natural freedom." Yet, regardless of the greatness of his power and sincerity, it was not sufficient to halt a movement started by the Wittenberg priest and teacher, Martin Luther.

Charles, the defender of the Roman Church, found himself face to face with Protestantism in Germany. He was forced by the inherent compulsion of this new religious movement, by the German Diet and the power of the German princes to adopt dilatory measures of concession. Politically he was opposed by the Pope united with France, by Suleiman the Magnificent in alliance with France, by England and France together, by the German free cities and Protestant princes united in the Smalkaldic League. Even the employment of the Inquisition accorded him no peace. Nor was the hope of his later years, the eventual incorporation of England in the Holy Roman Empire, realized. Charles severed the Netherlands from Germany and gave them to his son, the later Philip II of Spain. The thought was that this "dowry" might prepare a more cordial welcome for the marriage of Philip to the daughter of Catharine of Aragon, the staunchly Roman Catholic Mary, queen of England. The infelicitous union ended in Mary's early death, and served to predicate perspicuously the separateness of Romanism and Protestantism.

In all his endeavors, Charles' high ideals lay crushed. His spirit was broken. He had been unable to consummate the transcendent hope and centuries-old dream of the Empire, for he was opposed politically by nations being born into centralized, absolute states,

and religiously by a faith seeking God individually. In the end he voluntarily renounced his sovereignty and retired to the monastery San Yuste in Spain. His great Empire, forged by Charles the Great almost eight centuries earlier, was dissolved. His son Philip succeeded him in the Netherlands, Spain, and the colonies; Ferdinand, Charles' brother, succeeded him in Austria. And thus Charles bequeathed to the world a Spanish and an Austrian House of Hapsburg.

In this century the political history of Austria and Germany was again subjected to a dual strain: on its western borders contention with France, on its eastern borders, the menace of an Eastern power, ambitious for conquest. For centuries invaders had swept periodically to the borders of the European peninsula from the great plains of the East: among them, Attila, "the Scourge of God" in the fifth century, Genghis Khan, founder of the early Mongol Empire, in the thirteenth century. In the sixteenth century this danger appeared in the power of the Turks, in control of Constantinople since 1453. The Hapsburg rulers sustained a formidable struggle against them with the help of Venice on sea and Poland on land. In 1529 the enemy was forced to abandon the siege of Vienna, but he succeeded in the brutal conquest of the Balkans, the reduction of their people to serfdom, and the demolition of the brilliant Kingdom of Hungary. The Osmanli Turks and their Janissaries again besieged Vienna in 1682-83, and withdrew only before the strength of the Austrian armies, led by the gallant Prince Eugene of Savoy, 1716.

These pages of history, an epic of Europe, stretched over two-hundred and fifty years. During these centuries the Empire of the Hapsburgs was locked in a life and death struggle with the Eastern assailants, and it was simultaneously engaged in continuous rivalry with France. This two-fold tension remained a decisive factor in the history of the German countries. For something like a thousand years Central European lands checked the advance of the East in its drive to expansion toward the West. But this struggle against the East was forever complicated by a continuing quarrel with the Western nations of Europe, who, shielded so long by the Central powers, gave no thought to the actual Eastern threat.

They regarded the Center-Western struggle as the only important issue, with the grave historical consequences witnessed in our own day.

HUMANISM IN GERMAN LANDS

The revival of learning in Italy sought primarily to substitute the fresh fountains of life flowing from classical literature for the stagnant waters of scholastic studies. In Germany the interest in the classics also engendered a new joyousness. Yet whereas the Italian Renaissance was in the main identified with the secularization of life, the German Renaissance and its Humanism, true to the traditional interest in religion and theology, engaged in the critical examination of contemporary church lore and probed the import of Christianity in its original form.

By the sixteenth century there were those in Germany who dedicated their abilities to Hebrew and Oriental learning. It was these men of learning, who, together with the scholars in Greek, laid a basis for the humanistic biblical studies which were to advance the Reformation. They were aided in their endeavors by Johann Gutenberg's invention of movable type, which soon established printing presses throughout Europe and multiplied Greek, Latin, and Hebrew texts with a rapidity undreamed of by the patient copyists in the cloisters.

However, this is Humanism rather than Renaissance as understood in Italy. In fact, Germany knew neither a Renaissance state nor a Renaissance society in the Italian sense. The Imperial cities achieved an extraordinary economic and cultural strength in the late Middle Ages, but they contributed no important treatise for the understanding either of ancient philosophy or political science. The Italian influence stimulated translations, but it did not create literary masterpieces in Germany; German intellect, penetrative, serious, has little affinity with Italian form-loving plasticity, and it did not possess the inner and outer freedom which developed the *uomo universale* of the Italian Renaissance. But it bore within itself a winged strength which was to carry it in bold and lofty flights.

Germany had experienced a degree of secularization in the flowering of knighthood under the Hohenstaufen Emperors, 1152-

1250, in the brilliancy of the Middle High German epic and lyric of the same period, and in the growing cities. But the Middle Ages found their most essential and distinctively German expression in mysticism, in the Gothic cathedral, in the aspiration and hope for a universal empire dedicated to God. Parzival, 1200, is pertinently made to ask how he can be a knight and yet serve God. The transcendental bonds of the Middle Ages could not be sloughed off readily in Germany since the need for the presence of the Most High in man's heart was at no time stilled. Nor could German genius be persuaded to surrender to purely secularized pursuits with the same relish and alacrity possible to the more nimble Italian spirit. Thus it was that in the Late Middle Ages Germany demanded reform in the Church far more insistently than did Italy.

German Humanism, then, less directly descendent from antiquity than the Italian Renaissance, did not abandon the metaphysical thinking of the Middle Ages nor did it abdicate to a naturalistic enlightenment or theology. Moreover, Germany was not a unified nation nor even in the process of becoming one as were England and France and Spain. Humanism in Germany therefore could not summon the courtly-aristocratic air adopted by French Humanism under the Valois Francis I, nor could it unfold in literary blossoming as did the Late Renaissance in the England of Elizabeth and Shakespeare.

The German mood of the Late Middle Ages was best interpreted by the fifteenth century thinker Nicolaus of Cusa. This priest and cardinal, Neo-Platonist and Neo-Pythagorean, Augustinian and Aristotelian, fostered a German Renaissance that was purely spiritual. His revolutionary theism longed for the reconciliation of all forms of faith in a world religion, a religion which would unite reason with intuition, the realm of the transcendental with that of sense perception, the divine with the power of the human mind, God and world, a religion, conscious of the unity of God in the evolvment of countless particulars, and in the individual. Cusa, lawyer, historian, diplomat, theologian-philosopher, hoped for the reconstitution of the Holy Roman Empire, but at no time did it occur to him to refer to antiquity for the structure and model for either state or society. For in respect to the three great sources of German culture, the Germanic, the Christian,

and classical antiquity, the latter became influential in Germany only later. And even then it did not take on the form of a rational movement as in Italy where it persevered from early days in uninterrupted continuity. German regions were familiar only with the *continuatio Imperii*.

From the end of the fourteenth century on, the conceptions of the Brethren of the Common Life fashioned the form German Humanism was to take. The communal organization of the Brethren was founded by Gerhard Groote, 1340-1384, pupil of Jan van Ruysbroeck, b. 1293, a mysticist and prior of a Brussels monastery. Groote provided a firm constitution for the semi-monastic ideals of the organization which established its schools in north-west Germany, the Lowlands, and Belgium. The ideals of the active mysticism which this group taught and practiced were set down in a book which became famous in all Western countries: *De imitatione Christi*, Of the Imitation of Christ, written and compiled by Thomas Hemmerken of Kempen, usually called Thomas a Kempis, d. 1471.

The concern of this lay movement in German lands was not focused on the sacramental appurtenances of grace, but had to do with the personal assurance of redemption experienced in direct communion with God. These "Silent in the Land" lived their religion, the simple truths of Christianity, in widely scattered, unostentatious groups. Many of the early German humanists grew up under the influence of the pious Brethren at the famous schools of Deventer, Zwolle, Emmerich, Münster, Schleffstedt. Receptive to the mystical tendencies of practical piety, they believed learning to be of little value if it did not endow with purity of heart, humility, and love of one's fellow men. The German countries welcomed the new learning brought from Italy, but they turned to the study of classical Latin and Greek not for the sake of the aesthetic enjoyment derived therefrom, but that they might thereby be enabled to study the sources. And progressively all demands for reform, whether of Church, school, state, or society, converged in one requirement: improve and revivify learning by study of the sources, and disseminate the results among the untaught.

The Brethren of the Common Life, in the belief that priest and layman should know the Bible, began copying and duplicating the

original. This in defiance of the policy of the Church, which, since it had first forbidden the reading of the Bible at the Synod of Toulouse in France in 1229, had issued interdict upon interdict in this matter. Nonetheless, from the date of the invention of the printing press to 1521 a dozen or more translations of the Bible into German appeared. The translations, based on the Vulgate, were faulty enough and the style was roughhewn, but the publication of the Bible in the native tongue acknowledged the great urgency for this approach to the source of faith.

Let the original text be known and truth shall be set free. Peuerbach and Regiomantus examined the primary texts of Ptolemy and thus prepared the way for Copernicus. The translation of Greek classical works opened a new view of nature, and the humanist, having first adopted the view of the ancients, soon formulated his own. By philological method the accuracy of the text of the Bible was tested and Scholasticism and the Church Fathers were deposed from supremacy. Erasmus compared the original Greek of the New Testament with the translation in the Vulgate, and Reuchlin the Hebrew of the Old Testament, not for the purpose of attacking the Roman Church and its authoritative use of the imperfect Vulgate, but wholly from a sincere desire to arrive at truth.

However, the classical training, the classical Latin, and the anti-scholastic attitude fostered by the Brethren of the Common Life could not shatter Scholasticism so strongly intrenched in the universities. These institutions were engrossed in the unending dispute concerning the relation of faith and revelation to knowledge and reason. The battle between *via antiqua* (Thomism, Realism) and *via moderna* (Occamism, Terminism) of the Late Middle Ages was not so much a conflict between authority and reason, revealed faith and rationalistic cognizance, nor even in a great degree a battle between Scholasticism and Humanism, but a struggle rather between a revival of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas with emphasis upon their religious intent and a more recent trend to be less sceptical toward empirical knowledge. The study of the natural sciences, for instance, was not rejected by the Occamist. Both camps however adhered to theological metaphysics as of basic importance and to the method of Aristotelian dialectic.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, a number of universities, still appendages of the Church and conducted largely by

monastic orders, were opening their doors to humanistic thought. Learned groups founded by humanists aided the universities in spreading humanistic knowledge. In Heidelberg, Vienna, Cracow, the influence of the Latin-writing poet Celtis was particularly felt; in Augsburg Peutingger was the active humanist; in Nürnberg Pirckheimer, Dürer's friend; Mutianus Rufus, Hutten, and Cro-tus Rubianus belonged to the Erfurt group. The academic humanists engaged in pedagogical callings: poets, Latinists, historians, philologists became professors, and classical pretense remained an outer cloak, not a conception or manner of life.

The fifteenth German university, Wittenberg, was the first university in Christendom to be established without a papal deed of foundation.¹ The elector Frederick of Saxony founded the University at Wittenberg in 1502, and only in 1507, a year before Luther's appointment to the faculty, was the Pope's confirmation granted. Wittenberg was soon recognized as the outstanding university in Germany. At Luther's suggestion Hebrew, Latin, and Greek were taught; the traditional courses in philosophy, be they *via antiqua* or *moderna*, were abandoned. The simple text of Aristotle was read and the accumulation of commentaries ignored. Luther soon became the leader of the faculty of theology, and Melanchthon, appointed in 1518, achieved the same distinction in the faculty of philosophy. Wittenberg with its 2500 inhabitants often had almost as many students as townsmen. Students came from far and wide. Shakespeare sends Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, to Wittenberg. In this little town far more Latin than German was spoken. There is the story of a Pole, who, in 1536, after three years of study in Wittenberg, finally went to Nürnberg to learn to speak German. But Wittenberg, standing alone, had to do battle against the solid phalanx of all other universities, still bound by tradition and the Roman Church. Wittenberg dared to remove the study of Aquinas and Duns Scotus, and to return to the sources and to the Word of God.

Reuchlin, the First Comprehensive Linguist

A conspicuous figure in university circles, Johannes Reuchlin, 1455-1522, was the first Greek scholar in Germany and the foremost Hebrew scholar of the Renaissance period. He published a Hebrew grammar and lexicon, issued parts of the Old Testament

from the original Hebrew, and attacked the accuracy of the Vulgate translation. This aroused the old school theologians, particularly the Dominican friars, who were traditionally devoted to Scholastic theology.

Reuchlin could not agree with the converted Jew, Pfefferkorn, that all Hebrew books except those of the Old Testament be destroyed, and he protested against the Dominican persecution of Hebrew literature; the Dominicans in turn accused him of heresy. The controversy grew into a battle of polemics. Reuchlin's friends, humanists at Erfurt, published the *Epistolae obscurorum virorum*, Letters of Obscure Men, a series of anonymous letters, of which the first volume, written chiefly by Crotus Rubianus, appeared in 1515, and the second, in which Ulrich von Hutten participated, appeared in 1517. Certainly the bitter ridicule, partly slanderous, which these purported letters heaped upon the Cologne professors, especially upon Gratius, a capable scholar, upon Pfefferkorn, upon Scholasticism in general, as well as upon the profligacy admittedly existing in the hierarchy from pope to monk, was not to everyone's taste. Both Erasmus and Luther disapproved of this method of attack. But great satirical force and justified criticism were conveyed in this capital caricature of the exaggerated and grotesque Latin style current among the schoolmen. In this burst of wit and satire Humanism and the right to the unhampered pursuit of truth triumphed over Scholasticism and medievalism, and a wave of laughter rocked the Holy Roman Empire.

Scholastic theology found itself assailed by the friends of Reuchlin as well as by the philologist Reuchlin himself. This Greek and Hebrew scholar and thoroughly trained Latinist raised the cry "*ad fontes*" in protest against a comatose dogmatism. Thus critical, rationalistic, self-assured learning in Reuchlin and his defenders won decisively over the authoritarian tradition of the monastic, "obscure men," and Thomistic universalism was effectually worsted by a nationally conscious Humanism and a revolutionary method of education.

Ulrich von Hutten, Nationalistic Humanist

Ulrich von Hutten, 1488-1523, active in the publication of the *Epistolae* and a friend of Reuchlin and Luther, appropriated the critical material produced by the humanists to his use, and em-

ployed Latin as well as German for its wider dissemination. His challenging satire called upon knight and merchant to do battle against the Roman hierarchy, which, he asserted, rages against men's souls with inhuman severity, "not in the service of God nor on behalf of the general welfare of the laity, but to prepare blasphemous, disgraceful, evil works . . . and to bring Christian faith into disrepute."² A sense of national exigency spurred the efforts of this knight and humanist. His battle had to do with Rome, with the Roman Church, with its legalism, its exploitations, oppressions, with all Roman forces active in reducing Germany to abject bondage. Stormy and zealous, agitator by means of polemics, he proclaimed his views in epigram, invective, letters, lamentations, dialogue. The cultured pride of Humanism in him was certain that the human spirit, this spark of divine light, a "pool of God," knows that the kingdom of God is won by an upright, sincere life alone. And it knows too that man's thoughts and deeds make him holy, and not Pope Julian II in Rome.

Hutten left the monastery and therewith comfort and an assured maintenance of life, he forsook humanistic study and reflectiveness to go forth to urge to religious-political action. He renounced his allegiance to the Emperor after the Edict of Worms outlawed Luther, unafraid of the proscription the act would bring upon him. His ideal was a free German nation, and for this ideal he gave his life. Though national unity, so much desired by Hutten, made strides in England and France, it did not solve the great need of the age.

Whether he used invective, hurled shafts of cutting satire, called to battle, espoused the cause of political, social, or spiritual freedom, his writings are among the most passionate and powerful polemics produced in the age of the Reformation. His German poems written in a somewhat halting German in contrast to the fluent Latin he employed in his polemics, express his intrepidity, self-reliance, nationalistic consciousness, his deep sense of justice and obligation to his people, and an energetic response to the summons to activity. Hutten will live as long as there are those who prefer the *vita activa* to the usual humanistic *vita contemplativa*. The famous letter to the Nürnberg humanist Wilibald Pirckheimer, 1518, closes with a review of the great men of his age

and the triumphant cry of the humanist: "O age of learning! This is not yet the moment to retire, dear Wilibald! Learned pursuits are awakened, genius flourishes, it is a joy to live!"³

Thomas Murner: The Will to Reform Within the Church

Whereas Hutten, the nationalist, raised his voice on behalf of a united Germany, free from the countless oppressions perpetrated by the Roman Church in his native land, the German Franciscan monk, Thomas Murner, 1475-1537, in unbroken loyalty and allegiance to that same Church, raised his voice on behalf of its reform. This he proposed to accomplish by means of moralizing sermons and satirical excursions, much in the manner of the humanists. In the satire *Gäuchmatt*, Meadow of Fools, 1519, Murner expatiated on the folly of human amorousness. Closer examination of this tender passion of whatever age, ancient, medieval, or of his own offered proof conclusive that all erotic inclination is inane. The "Gauch," parodied as either a cuckoo, a fool, or a paramour, elucidates the imbecility and ridiculousness of such amatory indulgence.

In this satire Murner pretended to no personal dignity nor to any spiritual awareness of his monkhood. He was cynically frank in depicting the dissoluteness of the feminine and masculine devotees of Venus, queen of this rustic assembly. In humanistic vein *The Letters of Obscure Men* had satirically chastised the erotic vagaries counted among the many failings of monk and priest. And this same piquant theme engrossed the satirizing monk, the celibate Murner. Certainly the sixteenth century was able stout-heartedly to gulp large doses of a mixture of seriousness and buffoonery, of moralizing and obscenity so common in its day, but this preacher in a monk's cowl wearing the fool's cap appeared as a grotesque figure even to his contemporaries.

However, Thomas Murner's discernment did expose the low estate of spiritual life in the Church, in both clergy and laity. It did not occur to him that all hope of reform within the Church was vain. He did not dream of a solution outside the established Church. Luther's way of seeking a direct, personal approach to God, and his proclaiming therewith the purposelessness, even ineffectuality, of the Church as the sinner's intercessor before God, was in Mur-

ner's eyes sacrilege and a great crime. In 1522, he published the satire, *Of the Great Lutheran Fool, as conjured up by Dr. Murner*. This fool, an allegorical figure, represents the dangerous, revolutionary character of the Reformation, the abstract of the ruinous social and political consequences of Luther's teaching. Murner did not grasp the religious import of the Reformation. He was not even remotely aware of the force inherent in the insignia "Gospel," "freedom," "truth" which he himself inscribed on the three banners of Luther's revolt.

And yet Murner was urged on by a genuine sense of his responsibility as a shepherd of souls. In all sincerity he lamented the decline of Christian faith. He did not realize that moralizing satire would bring about neither peace of soul nor order out of the confusion of a chaotic age. Though he commanded great facility of expression, his style lacks precision and terseness. He added nothing to the German language nor to German cultural consciousness. But his recognition of the degeneracy besetting his age, and his vigorous assailing of it, assure him a place in the history of the spirit of the sixteenth century.

Erasmus

Desiderius Erasmus, 1466-1536, Gerhard Gerhards, who preferred to use the Greek equivalent of "beloved," "desired" as a name, was born in Rotterdam. In his youth he was sent to the convent-schools of Deventer and Herzogenbusch, where he became acquainted with the newly found treasures of antiquity. These schools of the Brethren of the Common Life aspired to inculcate an inward Christianity, the *devotio moderna*, and an appreciation of the ancient classics. They purposed to promote ascetic piety and an active cultivation and propagation of simple, sincere love for mankind.

At the age of thirteen Erasmus was sent to a monastery, and he was an Augustinian Canon Regular until 1517. In 1493 he went to Paris to study, then to Oxford, where he heard John Colet's lectures. He was in Italy around 1507, as far south as Rome and Naples. Although Italy was in the midst of High-Renaissance, Erasmus' letters of these years make practically no mention of painting, sculpture, or architecture. He may have become interested

in art later, when he himself was portrayed by Dürer and Holbein, for he praises Dürer's woodcuts. This European and cosmopolite was at home in Italy, England, Holland, and Germany. German Humanism flourished particularly in the cities Basel, Ulm, Freiburg, and Strassburg. With a few interruptions Erasmus lived in Basel and Freiburg from 1514 to 1536. He died in Basel.

Erasmus, the philologist, published the *Adagia*, a collection of 818 adages culled from the ancient classics in 1500; by 1508 the number had increased to 3,260. The *Apophthegmata* collected quotations from famous men of antiquity and became a source of wisdom to many subsequent writers, including Shakespeare. The religious work, *Enchiridion militis Christiani*, Manual of the Christian Soldier, 1502, suggests that Erasmus aspired to the reformation of the world through a Christian moralism based on a rationalized interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount. His dialogues and letters, of critical, personal, agile temper, were a prelude to the scathing *Moriae Encomium* (*Laus stultitiae*), *Praise of Folly*, 1509, Erasmus' most famed literary work. In this satire he lashes the luxury of the prelates, simony, nepotism, the indolence and immorality of monk and priest, the indifference to true religion of many a pope and bishop, the slothfulness and bigotry of monasticism, the empty formalism of Scholasticism, the wars of ambitious princes. He criticized the Church in the hope of a reform from within, in the hope that its dogma and practice might be brought to accord with the results of the new humanistic research, that the union of *pietas* and *humanitas* might be the basis for a new humanity and brotherhood among men.

In *The Praise of Folly* a self-assured and sovereign intellect disports itself in the guise of Stultitia, stupidity incarnate, an obliging gossip, fascinating her listeners, who are as ignorant, stupid, naively dull as she herself. Her wisdom concludes that ultimate truth inheres in whatever is foolish, witless, crass, and harmful. Stultitia desires nothing more than to remain stolid and stupid, and to make life endurable by its very folly. As she surveys mankind's endless tumults from afar, she fancies she is looking upon a swarm of gnats, being born, making war, fighting, killing, robbing, leading dissolute lives, fit only to decline and die. "What wrathful God it is that forces men to be born into this misery does not become me

to explain here. But whoever rightly considers it, will he not approve of the miserable example of the Milesian maidens who laid hands on themselves? . . . Are they not sages like Diogenes, Xenocrates, Cato, Cassius, Brutus? You see what would happen if all people were sensible. In this wretchedness I bring them help through ignorance, thoughtlessness, causing them to forget evil, to hope for the good, for a drop of joy, so that they will not desire to leave life even though life has long forsaken them."⁴

Folly as it appears here may be analyzed first as the subconscious, a-rational feeling in man which is the exact opposite of consciousness, reason, intellect. In the second place it is that conceited wisdom which so stubbornly ignored the abuses abroad in the Church. And thirdly, Erasmus interpreted religious emotions, fervor, enthusiasm, ecstasy as folly. This folly is identical with that referred to by St. Paul when he says that the Gospel is foolishness to the heathen. Indeed, the world and what is in it appears meaningless to Erasmus, and this meaninglessness — whether stupidity or religious fervor and ecstasy — constitutes its folly, that is, its evil. Stultitia, folly incarnate, the devil, evil incarnate, are reprehensible above all because they are essentially arrant fools. No enlightenment can drive out such darkness, for the humor and satire of *The Praise of Folly* grow precisely out of its "positive despair." Rationalism in its clearest moments does not affirm life. In contrast to Luther, whose personal faith surmounted the seeming senselessness of life, Erasmus here indulged a rationalistic, negativistic philosophy. This negativism gave issue to the inactive remoteness and the pained amazement with which he regarded the spirited vigor and the daring feats so characteristic of a Hutten.

THE CHRISTIAN HUMANISM OF ERASMUS

Erasmus confidently believed that probing ridicule directed at the stereotyped misinterpretation of the Scriptures would expose the crude distortions of pure doctrine and bring enlightenment. But that was not all. He hoped further that a critically cleansed Greek text of the New Testament provided with philological annotations and illuminating exposition might instruct the benighted dogma of the Church and enlighten the student of the Bible by a Christian-humanistic interpretation. For the end of all

learning is to know Christ. Therefore the sources of Christian wisdom had to be made accessible, and that required that original materials be unearthed, the Greek, the Latin, the Christian, the early Church Fathers. Latin must be known as the Romans knew it, the corrupt Latin of the Middle Ages must be discarded. Greek classical works had to be known in the original in order that the Greek New Testament and its Gospel might be rightly understood.

Erasmus' edition of the New Testament in the original Greek, 1516, was the first to appear in print. It is perhaps his most important work. Measured by modern standards, the text may show flaws and shortcomings, but this does not detract from the magnitude of his accomplishment. It has since become the possession of all Christianity. This scholarly achievement initiated the long war of Bible critique which has since agitated the world. Erasmus added a Latin translation so that the Scriptures might be translated into all tongues and become a household book. This Latin translation corrected the inaccuracies of St. Jerome's Vulgate, accepted until then as authoritative by the Church. A few years later Luther translated the New Testament into German with the help of the Greek and Latin texts provided by Erasmus.

The cultural ideal of Erasmus envisaged the Renaissance of Christianity, that is, the concord of classical individualism with Christian tolerance and love of mankind. Study of the Bible disclosed to him that its ethical truths foster the activity of the divine spirit everywhere and open men's eyes to the beauty, wisdom, and virtue of all ages. Erasmus firmly believed that ancient culture would reform the Church, that the teachings of Jesus could be understood only from the sources, and by the study of Plato, the Stoics, and Cicero. The Bible, he argued, documents human experience and Christianity is in essence the "philosophy of Christ." This "*philosophia Christi*" earnestly endeavored to unite Christian faith with the most human faculty in man, reason. It promises a reward in the world beyond and demands an ascetic moralism and a faith in Providence in this life. For the spirit of Christ was widely diffused even before His time. Thus there is a close kinship between antiquity and Christianity, between Socrates and Jesus. For the Bible, the book of truth, but confirms the truth as revealed in the conscience of man, especially to the great moralists. In the *Con-*

vivium religiosum Erasmus confesses to being tempted to beseech St. Socrates to pray for him. Jesus was another Socrates, and Jesus and St. Paul are to him of equal stature. He believed Christ to be nothing other than love, simplicity, patience, purity; Satan that power which draws man away from those ideals.

Erasmus thus found the simple philosophy of Christ to be identical with that of Seneca, Cicero, Plato, who were also divinely inspired. Truth was revealed to them by the Godhead even as it was to the noblest among the Greeks and the Romans. Like Reuchlin Erasmus accepted the religious, universalist theism of the Italian humanists, who beheld God active in all religions and philosophies, as well as in the moral-religious consciousness of each ennobled individual. This theism was sponsored by those in the Middle Ages acutely aware and intellectually unresponsive to the teachings of the Church from the Hohenstaufen Frederick II on. In the tale of the three rings Boccaccio recognized Saladin as the ideal embodiment of dignity, self-respect, nobility of mind. The humanists then recovered and winnowed this same view from their study of the classics, while the verses of Lorenzo il Magnifico phrased its definition most perfectly for the Platonic Academy of Florence.

In the true spirit of Humanism, Erasmus desired to free man in his moral nature by way of a philological rationalism with the help of the antique-pagan and Christian cultural heritage. Erasmus, the philologist, text critic and editor, hoped to substitute freedom of thought, an anti-dogmatic, Platonic, Stoical-Christian outlook for a Scholasticism enshrouded in darkness. Trained to obey reason, inspired by Christian love for all men, and guided by wisdom, man will act justly, love mercy, and be morally good. Let men learn to know God aright, to love Him, imitate Him, be like Him, let them assimilate the teaching of Christ and supplement it with the rational wisdom of the ancients, and they shall be truly virtuous. And virtue and faith together establish perfection. In seeking a simple piety for the layman, Erasmus proposed a rational faith which accepts Christ as man, burdened and heavily laden, suffering agony and death, His passion the prototype of man's own exalted affliction. Every man is the child of God. In this humanistic theology Christ, the Son of God, disappears and the "human" Christ, the man, stands forth in glory.

The Greco-Roman world of thought and the Christian spirit are inherently not contradictory, as Erasmus saw them; they rather complement each other, and Christianity is a logical and crowning development of antiquity. Erasmus misunderstood the essence of the Christian religion if he thought to renew its original teaching by the power of learning and intellect, if he thought to free it from Scholasticism and to rejuvenate it through critical research with the aid of Christian Late Antiquity. To be sure, he was persuaded of the singular value of Christian revelation and the teaching of the redemption of man through Christ, but he attributed little importance to the doctrine of original sin. The humanist in Erasmus found religious truth in the great intellectual creations of all peoples and times, while the scholar saw in the appearance of Christ but another historical event. Thus Erasmus thought it possible to fuse antiquity, timelessness, ethical Christian concepts in a new Christianity without doing injury to the person and teaching of Christ. Erasmus desired above all things to achieve harmony, simplicity, reasonableness, moderation, and peace, both for the world and for himself. He was a religious philosopher, a contender for aestheticism, a learned scholar, a lonely figure within the confines of the old Church. He aspired to a Christian Humanism, that is, he sought to unite faith and reason.

It is obvious that the untutored many could not comprehend this, nor could much beneficence fall upon them from the choice Latin Erasmus used. By fixing the essential import of Christianity in its ethical content and interpreting it in the spirit of antiquity, he failed to comprehend it adequately as a religion of salvation and the source of spiritual freedom. Nor could he experience its absolute ethical demands as did the religious genius of Luther. His wide learning presented to him that all things are justifiable whatever their source, and he became a relativist, widely tolerant. His theology of conciliation lacked the fervent, kindling power of the unambiguous solution which is born of direct religious dynamism. Luther lauded the erudition of Erasmus, but he added that this incomparable erudition was wholly inconsequential for personal decision in the matter of ultimate questions, and from these none might withdraw. Erasmus' humanistic gospel of Christ presents a manifold complexity, not unity. For "Christian" and "Humanism"

contain essentially opposed elements in their very concepts, and any so-called harmony between them ignores this fact. Nonetheless, Erasmus stimulated and incited a hundredfold, he bequeathed much and gave something to many, even though he did not achieve a structure of religious-ethical oneness.

THE CONSUMMATE HUMANIST

During the early decades of the sixteenth century, Erasmus, this sceptical rationalist who aspired to enlighten the world, towered above all others as the consummate representative of Humanism. His authority reached its apex shortly before Luther's appearance. He was sought out by king and court, by pope and scholar of the Western world, and to his words was conceded the infallibility of a canonical decree, be they spoken in jest or in earnestness. In the interest of truth and the ascertainment of the meaning of Christianity he was urged on to scholarly pursuits, and his search ranged from the examination of the point of view of Machiavelli's *Principe* to that of the Christian Renaissance; but he achieved neither harmony, homogeneity, nor fusion of the extremes.

Erasmus harbored in his soul two inconsonant strains, for though the discordant forces which influenced his formative years left their impress, the one came to fuller unfoldment than the other. His devotion to the literature of pagan antiquity outweighed the training to religious inwardness he received at Deventer. Receptive to the copious effusions of the Renaissance, he was ardently attached to the Greek satirist and rhetorician Lucianus. He assisted in editing Aristotle. His editions of Jerome, Ambrosius, Hilarius, and St. Augustine, indicate that the theological study of the doctrines, writings, and lives of the Fathers of the Christian Church also fascinated him.

It was these unreconciled extremes that incited his irony, a dejected irony. He was a man of peace, endowed with God-given reason, but he failed to attain to that love and that peace which passes understanding. He who at one time declared that nothing was more malicious than to attack that which one does not understand, was a bitter opponent of science. He remained unmoved by the discoveries and explorations of his day, and the incomparable art of the Renaissance in Italy seems to have conveyed little to him. His attention was focused on ethical problems. This delicate, super-

sensitive, form-loving pacifist, whose nature, as he expresses it, "shrank from battle and preferred to play in the open fields of the Muses rather than with sword in hand,"⁵ proud of his tolerance, still scorned the ruder society of his day. He consistently sought the friendship of wealthy patrons, resorted to ambiguity in order to retain their favor, cultivated an aloofness fostered by a conscious certainty of the supereminence of literary culture. His ideal of a gentle, noiseless life was studded with the irony of contrast and contradiction; an irony that gloried in its learned and decorous supremacy, that elected to chat, banter, observe, formulate, chide, and hoped in such manner to reform the Western world.

Living in the past, fascinated by the Augustan age, especially by the polish and suavity of Cicero and Horace, he helped to destroy medieval prejudices and superstitions. He pointed the way for a future universal, a-confessional theism, and he offered much to the work of the later Counter-Reformation in the Roman Church. He was deeply entangled in his age and yet he considered himself superior to it. He was bent on drawing men away from the mysteries of faith to a simple morality and to the amenities of a highly developed culture. This philologist, who insisted on the critical approach to every text, assailed those who search out the literal meaning of Holy Writ, and for the moment he granted to Scriptures the sanction of an allegory only. On the other hand, it was his desire that the Gospels and Paulinian Epistles be translated into all languages, so that all, the women too, might read them; yet he would reserve to the Church alone the prerogative of judging in matters of dogmatic dispute.

It appears that Erasmus, kindly, humane, timid, the most cultured man of his age, did not possess a soul shaken by prolonged and convulsed religious upheaval. He wrote in a letter to Archbishop Warham that he was not inclined to risk his life for the sake of truth. "We have not all strength for martyrdom; and if trouble come, I shall imitate St. Peter. Popes and emperors must settle the creeds. If they settle them well, so much the better; if ill, I shall keep on the safe side."⁶ Thus, he would deny truth rather than imperil his life. To be sure, truth is to be preferred if it is to be had, but it is hardly defensible to make it the one thing needful for existence.

This rationalist with a satirical vein, this sceptical moralist seek-

ing an ethical, practical-pious life did not know the torturing sense of guilt nor the salvation wrought by grace. The need of divine mercy is felt only by him who knows himself guilty before God, who lives in a realm more profound and loftier than the realm of moral idealism. In this Erasmus could not understand Luther. The ethical rationalism so characteristic of Erasmus was a subsidiary experience in the deeply religious realizations of Luther. The humanist posited and purposed the perfection of man. Luther looked upon man as he appears in the presence of Holy God, impotent toward his own rescue.

The pronounced piety of Erasmus, his reserve and seriousness evidence an objective temper; the keen intellect of this pupil of the ancients encountered many facets of truth, and by obversion inferred the negative from the positive. The extremes of doubt and despair existed as the converse to high certitude, a certitude undoubtedly imparted in the school at Deventer. Any definite assertion provoked its opposite. Erasmus confessed that he rejoiced so little in assertions conveying one meaning that he made common cause with the sceptics wherever the inviolable authority of Holy Scriptures and the Church permitted it.

However, he gladly submitted to the Church, whether he comprehended what it prescribed or not. He confessed that no matter how great the learning and subtlety of Albert Magnus, Thomas, or Occam, supreme truth and authority were to be found in the Bible alone. He admitted according adoration to that which his reason could not understand because here, in Holy Writ, he stood in the presence of the alone unshakable and "irrefragible" authority! The very deep influence of the Brethren of Common Life is further apparent in his positive "knowing" that the Christian philosophy consists to a greater degree in the trembling heart than in syllogism, that it is life rather than disputation, divine inspiration rather than learning, that it effects a transformation not wrought by *ratio*.

This Renaissance-Christian rationalist turned to the pre-Christian classical thinkers and the Church Fathers in his search for truth. They were the models. They established standards. Christ is the fulfillment. In his diatribe *De libero arbitrio* against Luther he acknowledged the authority of truth reposed in the Fathers:

"I should like the reader to consider whether he thinks it reasonable to reject the opinion of so many Church Fathers, accepted so long by so many peoples . . . I know I shall not resist truth, for I do homage to true Evangelical freedom."⁷ He reiterated over and over that he found the epitome of perfection and purity in Christ.

Erasmus, who saw man as a moral being, whose ideal was the cultivation of humanistic learning for the nurture and perpetuation of human virtues, dedicated his talent to the urgent need of ecclesiastical, moral, and religious reform. To effect it, he exploited the variableness of mood and occasion, and bequeathed to the world an imperishable heritage of much of the culture of his age. He left a scintillating flow of playfulness, mockery, creative joy, vanity soliciting admiration, literary ambition, disdain, coolness, warmth, seriousness, yet withal the call to repentance and to an assured acceptance of the "philosophy of Christ." Erasmus, the humanist, did have his roots in Christianity. He could not escape the influence of the *devotio moderna*, nor the fact of having been born into a Roman Catholic Europe.

If it appears that the phrasing and choice of his words was as important to him as what they say, that but reflects the humanist Erasmus, devotee to form and reason. His will to life was broken because he lacked a sustaining faith of the heart. However impossible it may be to arrive at a final conclusion concerning his work, and however much the man Erasmus may remain an enigma, he was a scholar, and as such he is great. He set future centuries a task which will remain as long as a Western-Christian culture endures.

Paracelsus, the Independent Seeker

Humanism enlarged its scope and pointed to new paths in all fields of human experience: philology, pedagogy, jurisprudence, medicine, natural science, history. The principle was established that the study of source material is prerequisite for all scientific research. The labors of Nicolaus Copernicus (Kopernik), 1473-1543, indicate to what far spheres Humanism extended its search. At the end of the century Johann Kepler of Württemberg, 1571-1630, promulgated the three great laws of the harmony of the planets. Kepler, piously confident that his was the right observation

of God's world, encountered difficulty in expressing adequately the results of his conscientious research. In this he resembled another natural scientist of the sixteenth century, namely, Paracelsus.

Contending with the groping science of his day, which did not yet know either a Copernicus or a Kepler, Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, called Paracelsus, 1493-1541, laid the biological and chemical basis for medicine, especially for the use of chemistry in pharmacy and therapeutics. The whole volcanic eruptivity of the century, the energy, independence, and obstinacy characteristic of the Swabian, a capacious comprehension and a sense of the future were compacted in this spirited personality. Opposed to humanistic culture, Paracelsus built on a faith arrived at independently; he accepted neither the Church of Rome nor the belief of the Evangelicals; he was neither a spiritualist in the sense of the zealots, nor a mysticist, nor even a pantheist, though possessing something of each of these. His faith grew out of a spontaneous interpretation of the Bible, as well as out of his own analysis of the world of outer reality.

This early philosopher-scientist furthermore spurned the authority of the guild and of current medical practice; disappointed with the universities and their medieval Aristotelianism, his censure spared neither the Greek Galen nor the Arab Avicenna, the esteemed guides in the medical study of his day. His father, a physician, taught him to delve in mine, smelting plant, and laboratory, introduced him also to alchemy, that "science" which in its first attempts at experiment in a new world of growing awareness and observation may have been nearer reality than is usually conceded it. So that he might heal, he distilled, mined, and assayed. It was his task to bring together knowledge and application, to establish relevant agreement between nature's activity and man's need.

In his eagerness to ascertain the causes of health and illness in man, he explored all possible sources. His investigative hunger drove him through the length and breadth of Switzerland, Germany, to Granada, Lisbon, to Sweden, England, Poland, Lithuania, Hungary, Croatia, Turkey, Greece, and to Alexandria in Egypt. He accompanied armies, and in the midst of warfare, hunger, pestilence, destitution combined medical science with surgery, research with

practice. "Bestow your gifts willingly, so that none will need to force or persuade you either to withhold or to sell your services. Let your help be given freely and of a willing heart."⁸

The Renaissance *Zeitgeist*, this inextinguishable thirst for experience which prompted every kind of activity, this desire to "realize" the earth through exploration, this belief in the actuality of the apparent world impelled Paracelsus to search for the substance behind the phenomenon. He wanted to understand the near and the far, to give bounds to the unbounded, to name things still unnamed. He was not primarily an empiricist, whose main concern is sense experience, a weighing, measuring, and counting of the fullness of the earth. To be sure, he saw "things," he projected his thought into them and through them, he experienced them, he talked and walked with them; and yet this perceptible materiality, he found, is not independent of the hand and the touch of the Creator. The majesty of nature, sustaining Paracelsus' awed alertness, invited him to dare to penetrate into a dark, mysterious earth. But neither observation, experience, nor reflection was adequate for him without God's revelation. God, not the world itself, is the foundation of the universe; all the objective world together is not equal to God, it is only the way to Him. Though replete with form and figure in repose, it is above all a breathing, a teeming, and constant creation and occurrence.

The inquiring temper of Paracelsus could not accept nature as a compound of static "universals" as the Galenists saw it; to him stone and star are not fixed, nor are they localized in their activity; neither is the universe a bounded Something shut out from the realm of God and spirit. Paracelsus was not a pantheist. Nature is not matter, it is a continuously active energy and a living transformation. Paracelsus was also removed from many aspects of mysticism. As an exercise of the soul mysticism stands in contrast to the urge to give contour, to individualize, to delimit in classic form. Paracelsus sought to delineate and bind the infinite, for he could not surrender to the "formless." And the path of "being-in-God" and of the "indwelling-God" was not his. He was the Christian, to whom God is a Father, a person; he did not praise God in the "oneness" and "aloneness" of the "All." To him the individual is the valid symbol, and the universal is forever present as the

particular and singular. Theology was the basis for his research; as a physician he was a helper and an active Christian. He made no attempt to resolve the cosmos, which is the world of law and order, into its unshapen source and nothingness. He preferred as a Christian physician to fulfill the purposes of creation, that is, to practice his convictions outwardly and inwardly. He was not a part of the Christianity of the Middle Ages, blind to nature; nor was he like the naturalist, alienated from God, who was to appear in later centuries.

Upon Erasmus' recommendation Paracelsus was called to Basel in the capacity of city physician and professor of medicine. But here, as everywhere, he was attacked by the medical guild and faculty, and labelled a heretic in medicine. He publicly burned the *Canon Medicinæ* in 1527. These speculations handed down from the past to the medical guild were inadequate to a Paracelsus, in whom medicine united philosophy with natural science. He endeavored to amalgamate the two. In the discharge of this duty lies his greatness.

Paracelsus was conspicuously individualistic. His demeanor displayed indifference, even superiority to his colleagues. Though he was poverty stricken, he bore himself with pride in the presence of the rich, and lavished compassion and selflessness upon the poor. Famed for his success in medical practice, he was sought out when others failed. His research, his simplicity in dress and manner, his contempt for all pomp inevitably made his new methods and view of life obnoxious to the old learning. This restless disputant was an offense to the self-satisfied, so dependent upon authority and ceremony. Since the concept of an own, free, independent creative personality was new, this innovator, disturbing, obviously dangerous, yet withal prepossessing, was relegated to the familiar category of swindler, quack, magician. Duped and defrauded on all sides, grossly slandered, he was persecuted and tracked to the very end.

It must be borne in mind, that when the medical guild of the sixteenth century attacked a cause, which it feared and therefore hated, it attacked the person representing it; it had not yet learned to differentiate between the cause and the man, nor did it sense the moral excellence intrinsic in cultivating a spirit of discrimination. Moreover, Paracelsus' prodigal self-confidence and self-

acclaim inevitably invited antagonism. He publicly proclaimed his conceit: "Follow me! Avicenne, Galen, Rhasis, Montagnana, . . . you of Paris, of Montpelier, of Swabia, of Meissen, Cologne, Vienna . . . Italy, Dalmatia, Athens, Greek, Arab, Israelite follow me; I shall assuredly not follow you!"⁹

PARACELSUS AND THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

In his lectures at the University Paracelsus used the German language. The Latin of Scholasticism and Humanism was not competent in the new "things," these mobile forces and transforming processes. For all this previously unknown, unsurveyable mass of new, independent material, this groping surmise of growth and happening in nature's world, this broad range of hidden truths awaiting release that was being assembled in Europe's mines, smelting plants, assay laboratories, battlefields, hospitals, forests, and meadows, found at its disposal as a means for expression and dissemination a bankrupt system of classification, unfledged concepts and words. None after him and none before him since Ionian antiquity encountered such wealth of material with such privation in the instrument for translation.

Plato had met with like difficulties when he was called upon to melt into one the clarity and order of Socrates, the dangerous freedom and play of mind of the Sophists, the East-West stream of mysteries. Binding them into harmony, he rounded out the old and laid the groundwork for the new and future Western world. And even as the Dome of Florence united in itself and spanned its many parts, so did the Renaissance fuse and form the manifoldness of the old into new life. Thus Paracelsus wove Roman-antique, Patristic, Greek-Oriental-Arabic, Scholastic concepts, Neo-Platonism as well as the teachings of the cabbala into his new interpretation of the world. He rescued the idea of the cosmos as known to the Middle Ages and united the differentiated objects it contains in masterful analysis. Thus the past was reborn and its continuance into the future secured. In contrast to the speculation of Scholasticism he insisted on experience and experiment, in contrast to the Renaissance he saw the world born of God, in contrast to mysticism his impulse directed to clarity and incorporation, in contrast to later views he believed that energy and mobility constitute the

core of the universe, rather than matter. "Now however there is nothing outward except it be a sign of the inward."¹⁰

The modern scientific age, the thinking through an experience in order to discover the recognizable, provable law directing it, began after Paracelsus. Galileo, Kepler, Bacon, Descartes, Newton, Leibniz, scientists and philosophers, prepared the way for an inquisitorial intellect which dissects all forms and conditions of knowledge. Paracelsus' research was not yet pure rationalism, even as his practice of medicine was one of service, not of calculated utility. And so his desire to express this new sensing and beholding, his task of hewing a path through the brambles of delusion, the singularity and novelty of his insight, forced him to use the vernacular, the German tongue.

Every new religious experience creates its own language, and Paracelsus struggled with German as had the mysticists before him, the "*philosophi teutonici*," and his contemporary, Luther. The great genius first of all sees, names, and designates the objects before him; but beyond apprehending the world of "things" he is awakened to the mysterious fascination of the earth, its retention of the Eternal, its relation to the universe; and this he attempts to convey in human terms. Leonardo, Dürer, Kepler, as well as Paracelsus, faced this problem. Paracelsus found it difficult to state clearly and adequately his intrinsic, particular experience, he could not readily set forth the observed whole in distinct words and unite it with the awe he felt in the presence of the observation. He was not able to demarcate sharply occurrence and knowing, the perception of the senses, the activity of thinking, and the divination of the soul. He lacked the technical skill of transmitting the impressions of the differentiated significance inherent in the faculties of seeing, reasoning, feeling. His concepts struggled for words, his insight called for utterance; but the inexplicable in the new material presented difficulties which he could not wholly resolve.

Yet he ranks as one of the first among the men of enlightenment. Varied and problematical relations of the soul had found a fecund language long before the world of objects emerged from a limited concept of place, relation, manner, extent, degree within the comprehended and expressed circumference of observation. Long ago the reasons and purposes in the realm of the soul had found words

and phrases to mold spiritual relativities and absolutes. It was Paracelsus' significant achievement first of all to have discovered and related his naive observations of time and space to the timeless and spaceless, and then, to have begun to create the required technics. He made an awkward beginning. He was forced to break with the past in science and its engagement to magic. The "universals" of the Middle Ages, generalities and type ideas, failed before his specialized knowledge and findings. He groped his way to new turns of speech in an attempt to provide information in simple and fitting words.

Paracelsus' philosophic-scientific writing is buoyed by a triumphant self-confidence; he knew what he knew. But his isolation and the continued attacks of his enemies increased his gruff incivility. Just as a later Nietzsche was not permitted to remain long at the University of Basel, so Paracelsus was soon driven out. Frustration served to intensify the need to share his new discoveries and spurred on his pride, choler, and restlessness. He sought relief in formulating devotional tracts, meditating upon the Bible and upon his private life, but they lacked the revolutionary penetrancy that distinguishes his scientific inquiry. They do not exhibit the grasp and flair, that largeness of sense-experience filled with a boundless faith in God which is generally characteristic of him.

GOD AND NATURE

Paracelsus pronounced that truth lies in God, in nature, that it springs from the union of an autonomous nature and an autonomous Christian faith. Christianity is the hypothesis in all his writings. He called himself "*den Philosophen nach der deutschen Art*,"¹¹ the philosopher in the German manner, that is, to him religion is macrocosmic and practical, the substance of God's activity in man, and the effectualness of the "heavenly seed" in what man bears and does.

Man, the abstract of all that exists in heaven and on earth, attracts the soul of all things, creatures, spirits, elements, minds, to a focus in the spiritual center which dwells in him as in every form. He is the "*quinta essencia*" of all that is, a microcosm, the acme of individualism, differing from the macrocosm only in that the essences which constitute the macrocosm appear in him in another image, order, shape. To man belong all the potencies and qualities that

exist in the universe, whether active or latent. His terrestrial substance is from the earth, his mental faculties derive from universal mind, his worldly wisdom from the light of nature. Divine wisdom in him belongs to God. The vigor of all the spheres is compressed within him, in him the inner smith Archaeus is at work, that invisible counterpart of the visible body which directs continued existence and development, that vital principle, which the flesh either enthralls or enthrones. With the help of these convictions, Paracelsus sought in each thing its most subtle core, the "seed of gold," the elixir, and in man that infinitesimal something called human: "*homunculus*" endowed with the grace of magic power.

He feels unequivocally that Holy Writ points the way to man's duty: to health. The import of the Holy Scriptures is purification of the impure through the Holy Spirit, and Holy Spirit knows none other than the way of love. Original sin is an illness, rather than the fall of man away from God. One kind of illness may be sent by God, man himself creates the other kind when he permits his spiritual energy to turn actively toward evil. Man can not recognize, probe, or heal illness through self alone, but only by his seeking to experience, to explain, to gain insight into the immeasurable, inexpressible, impenetrable foundation of Creation. He must come into the presence of that transforming power, which is neither matter nor law, but the reservoir of God ever behind the transient and changing. God is ineffable; He is the contrast to the named and the limited. He is the Nameless, the Illimitable, the Source of Being, hence Not-Being, or as mysticism logically calls it, the Nothing. Therefore no name applies to Him, for a name seeks to make the Infinite finite.

God lies in man as the ore in the mountains and the medicine in the plant. In order to come nearer Him, Paracelsus distilled, refined, sublimated matter. In sulphur he discovered the fire, in mercury the mobility, and in salt the bitterness that constitute life. Metals are not dead, for "*olea, salia, sulphura*" are the great "reservatives" that maintain life. They awaken energy and strength in ill bodies. Stones, as well as roots, herbs, and plants live; they grow. But far above and beyond this, this nature-philosopher and passionate vitalist persistently declared man's destiny to be love. The loving and believing heart is man's physician, in it are nurtured love, faith in God, compassion toward man. God, the "medicine of

bliss," resides in the loving and believing heart. He alone is the one true fountainhead of all healing.

Paracelsus did not attain to the stature of a Meister Eckhart or a Luther; in addition to their greater genius, their acquaintance with Latin books from childhood, with Latin Scholasticism particularly, fostered their power of expression. From childhood on Paracelsus had to commune with mute objects, and then he was pressed to find the words and sentences that would impart something of the fluidity and luminousness he surmised in the world of objects. This inadequacy in expression hampered him greatly and though in fullness and power he was excelled by few in his century, he could not vie with so commanding a personality as Luther. His was a new affirmation of life, even as was Luther's new faith. But the need for the soul's healing was in his day more pressing than the need of a healthy body. Therefore Luther's "God" stirred the sixteenth century and those following far more profoundly than did Paracelsus' "nature."

Yet, though he could not soar, he most assuredly did not crawl. Passionately, impetuously he broke into the inchoate mass of things to refashion them, to endow them with spirit; and this invasion was as important as his new method of healing, as his founding of vitalism, or as his chemical, biological, pharmaceutical, or therapeutic discoveries. This adventurer in the problems of time and space lived on beyond these as one, whose life and achievement expressed an incessant striving to comprehend all God's intercourse with His creation. This Alemannic physician was impelled to seek out every trace of God's finger in the universe. His natural science, though it did not yet dissect and analyze in today's sense, pursued the markedly human aim to know; and his aspiration, freed from an impersonal spiritual hierarchy, proclaimed the individual soul filled with vast, shadowy hints of the boundless. "Thus I wandered through the lands and was a peregrinator in my allotted time — alone, a stranger, and different. Then Thou, oh God, didst let Thy skill increase amidst the surge of the fearful wind of agony within me."¹²

RENAISSANCE INFLUENCE UPON THE TOWNSMAN

Although *humanitas* means "mankind," "humanity," and although essentially humanistic studies were in the beginning

prompted by an interest in the thoughts and the manner of expression found in the leaders who were active in the renewal and ennoblement of culture in ancient Rome, the efforts of humanistic scholars were soon transformed into the study of ancient languages, grammar, philology, rhetoric. Following the Italian example, the German humanist also aspired to the mastery of the Latin language for the sake of acquiring eloquence and elegant diction.

Humanism, in its wider sense however, did not confine itself to proficiency in a polished Latin style. Nor was it confined to the acquisition of greater philological intelligence, nor even to the appropriation of the wisdom of the ancients. There was another side usually stressed far less than the interest in learning, which must be assumed to have been a part of a humanistic Renaissance. It was a liberative force exhibiting no humanistic graces. It declared its presence in the pleasures of a free, unfettered, boldly erotic life. It struts insolently across the pages of compilations of *Facetiae*, and is suggested by the spirit of the *Epistolae obscurum virorum*. This freedom was one phase of the individualism which was pertinently submitted in the "master" code of morals proposed by Machiavelli; this individualism was now gradually expanding the range of its influence.

For beyond the excellence of language and rhetoric, the Italian had proffered piquant anecdotes in the *Facetiae* of Poggio, in the erotic tracts and amorous tales of Aeneas Sylvius, later Pope Pius II, who had been for a time at the Austrian and Imperial chancellery. It is true, Humanism was philological: it rejoiced in stylized sentences imitating classical models and in quotations from the ancients. But in the *Facetiae*, in the erotic tracts and amorous tales the humanist forsook an arid and pedantic desert for the fresher fields of sprightly vigor and growth. The Renaissance in its broad inclusiveness stemmed from the fertile minds of the Italian people, and its accomplishments were more than an exercise in improved Latin, more than the mastery of proportion in painting, or achieved symmetry of the human form in sculpture.

Thus there was more involved than poetry, eloquence, and rhetoric in the life and works of a Conrad Celtis, 1459-1509, Latin poet belonging to the early generation of German humanists. This

student and gifted, lyric poet, traveling from university to university, enthusiast for the new learning, founded humanistic groups in Cracow, Heidelberg, Mainz, Vienna, and finally became professor of poetry and rhetoric in Vienna. His elegies, *Amorres*, influenced by Ovid and Horace, written in a form and rhythm polished and sparkling, depicted his wanderings and amatory experiences with unembarrassed frankness. Conrad Celtis confessed himself a philosopher. It appears however that his ethical standards were none too exacting. The *philosophia naturalis* engaged him far more than the *philosophia moralis* or *rationalis*. Much the same may be said of other poets and scholars. The striving for ethical regeneration frequently assumed to have distinguished the German humanists was not too present in this early group. However, the knowledge of Latin in all its purity, the legacy of ancient classical writers was optimistically hailed by them as the supreme source of learning.

In its German peculiarity Humanism germinated and put forth its shoots in the towns. The peasants were still dreaming of the rebirth of the old empire. Most universities in the early decades opposed the revival of classical Latin. The princes could not bring themselves to effect any serious reform. The Church artfully thwarted the convocation of any new Council. But if the forces of decline were active in prince, clergy, and peasant, the new spirit, eager and enterprising, agitated the towns. "The ne'er-dowell clergy," wrote Sebastian Franck, an independent humanist and historian, in his *Weltbuch*, "study little, occupy their time almost entirely with playing, eating, drinking, and pretty women. The nobility in its present disposition represents a residual of paganism . . . and has completely lost its former glory. The townsmen, however! The third estate, the burgher . . . formerly barbarian, unskilled, naive, uncultured, unbridled, warlike, has now become subtle, worldly-wise, ingenious, and moreover, daring in all affairs, cheerful, and clever."¹³

The spirit of the burgher found expression in the shrovetide play, a farcical burlesque adding exhilaration to the carnival before Lent, in the *Meistersang*, in the *Volkslied*, and in the chap-book or *Volksbuch*. The shrovetide farce arose in the towns in the fifteenth century, and lingered on in the sixteenth. It was enacted on Shrove

Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday. Masked processions performed the play which satirically presented fools of every kind: peasants, indolent clergy, quacks, penitents, lovers, drunkards, loquacious women. The portrayal gave free rein to a naturalism, crudeness, indecency, and frankness almost inconceivable. Most of the shrovetide plays were the work of youthful, unbridled butchers, waggoners, shoemakers, tanners of the towns. With limitless braggadocio, colossally snobbish, they deported themselves as lords. This stratum of society was wholly unaware of any humanistic intent, totally ignorant of the goal of a Petrarch or Dante, yet somehow acquainted with the adventures of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. These townsmen awakened to self-expression, revealed unpurged, licentious thinking. They were scornful of all classes, but most of all of the peasant, more hated and despised than either heathen or Turk. The peasant was the glutton, cheat, corrupter, and he was caricatured in a style that touched every note in the gamut of coarseness. The shrovetide plays, like the *Facetiae*, were guided neither by aesthetic consideration, restraint, nor scruple. They were the product of the unemployed plenitude and vigor of youthful years, the years of indiscretion in culture.

But youthfulness and the consciousness of vitality and robustness do not explain the coming of a new spirit, for youthfulness in fact does not make history. Spiritual and intellectual forces are the mainspring of history, not youth, not physical abilities. And in the new culture the burgher was somehow to discern that freedom from the bondage to the old necessitated the formulation of concepts for the new. And so, for instance, in the *Spil von konig Solomon und Markolfo*, the *Play of King Solomon and Markolfo*, the king proudly introduces himself as descended from David and Solomon; and Markolfo, not to be outdone, boastfully recites the list of his progenitors, coarse peasant appellatives. The burgher, however much he despised the peasant and however great his scorn of the arrogant nobility, had nonetheless come to a basic conclusion, "You are a man even as I." We are all human beings, therefore equal. The poetry and prose of these plays may be crude and rude, idiom and phraseology may be untouched by any humanistic learning, but they expressed what the people, the players and spectators felt within their hearts, they published convictions and judgments typical of coming centuries.

The mystery and morality plays, the shrovetide plays of the Middle Ages, restricted as they were to the purpose of portraying the story of man's salvation, had presented type characters. A collectivistic age does not know the particular, nor the characterization which depicts the individual. However, under the influence of Renaissance, Humanism, and the Reformation, poets began to portray personal fate and experience, and this in turn gave birth to the drama, in essence a representation of the tensions and conflicts experienced in a specific life. All dramatic creativeness of this age now drew either upon the religious faith of the Reformation in the so-called drama of the Reformation, or upon Christian ethics in humanistic drama. Or it emphasized the integrity of the burgher as in Hans Sachs, whose sources were both the Reformation and Humanism.

The art of writing poetry had been fostered through the years by those who hoped to preserve the formal tradition and technique of the lyric of the Middle High German Minnesinger. Concerned that this fine art might become extinct, burghers and craftsmen in Mainz founded a Guild of Mastersingers in 1311. By the end of the fourteenth century most German towns had similar schools intent upon teaching a regulated prosody. Rules and form soon superseded content and scarcely more than artifice and the counting of syllables and rhyme schemes survived. The later *Meistersinger* encompassed a wider range of material and form and expanded the scope of their activity. They made Nürnberg famous. Since they were artisans and tradesmen in addition to being "poets," they established guild-like organizations for the study and practice of their art, and for the promotion of the singer from "apprentice" to "master" in poetry and song.

The most renowned *Meistersinger*, Hans Sachs, 1494-1576, a shoemaker in Nürnberg, gave final form to the German shrovetide play. A burgher, skilled in his handicraft, surveyed the foibles of clergy, peasant, townsman, soldier, maid, nobleman, physician, and his blithe drollery molded this folly into *Meistersang*, fable, proverb, prose dialog, shrovetide play, farce, either tragical or comical. The *Schwank*, a short, witty, dramatic tale, provided a fit instrument for the display of his ability, for the unfolding of his experiences and observations, his delightful humor, and his sense of mimicry and drama.

To be sure, his talent did not incline to great tragedy born of uncontrolled passion, nor to comedy mercilessly exposing man's frailty to ridicule. His belief in the essential goodness of man shed radiance over the contrast between the "ideal" and the "real," and diffused over all the brightness of a musing smile. To this best-beloved poet of the sixteenth century, to Hans Sachs, representative of the honest, diligent burgher of the German city of his day, plying his trade and indefatigably his art, Richard Wagner set a monument in his *Musikdrama, Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Hans Sachs, the greatest among mastersingers, loyal to the idea of self-sacrifice for the sake of love of mankind, is here able to renounce freely the dearest desire of his heart because he has grown greater than self.

Lyric poetry, in the form of the folk song, *Volkslied*, though it had existed for centuries, enjoyed its period of florescence in Germany in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The *Volkslied*, a product of the burgher class, a communal song to be sung at festival and dance, at the town well and spinning-wheel, sang of simple conditions and relations in life, which, by their very limitation and simplicity, reflect the world and elevate to the universal the particular experience of a single moment and place. The folk song, instinct with joy and sorrow, might be the work of a talented student, hunter, monk, or peasant, and again of a gifted poet. It expressed what dimly abides in the heart of man, yearnings and hopes which endure and eternally recur; an earth transfigured by God's friendly sun, tears, joyousness, renunciation, gladness, dejection, and sometimes tragedy: on the whole it is borne by a faith that somehow the "crooked shall become straight and the rough ways smooth."

Traces of religious mysticism and Christian training are unmistakable. Firm and unyielding goodness, love that survives trial and time, loyalty, fortitude, compassion, magnanimity always triumph. Pride, avarice are punished. There is no deterioration to the lachrymose, there is neither doubt nor inner conflict, but rather faith, a confident knowing that a good and loving God rules life and the world. The folk song as well as the fairy tale avoids all expressions of sentimentality, but its very silence evokes the feeling which in fullness of joy or sorrow had to be uttered. Man

reaches for the simple, eternal good, and in reaching, stretches beyond his finite existence, and so deepens and widens the compass of his spiritual possessions.

The *Volkslied* is built as of one piece, unified and compacted in concentration upon one mood. Its intimacy with nature attracts it to the stability inherent in a friendly hill, the forest, a tree dear to memory, the song of the lark or nightingale, a rose, a violet, and through these the deep significance of life is made known. The images are complete in themselves, sketched in bold lines, sporadic, disrupted, committing to words the indispensable only. For in the *Volkslied* the burgher, exercising the prerogative of self-expression, ignored the rules and laws of artistic construction.

With reserve, without brooding, pleasure and pain are accepted. And thus, to the rhythmic swing of the sickle in harvest a maiden laments the loss of her lover. Her companion reveals the happiness that is hers amid violets and green clover. The one has found love, the other stands alone, forsaken. The mood is indicated in the contrast of fall and spring, in the comfort which serves only to accentuate plaintive woe.

THE WILL TO KNOW SEEKS GOD

D. Johann Fausten

The most famous of the chap-books of the century, the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, published in 1587, was to serve as "a horrible example and sincere warning for inquisitive, and presumptuous and godless ones." Historically Johann or Georg Faust was born in Württemberg, and lived from about 1490 to 1540. As a student, versatile, keen, he traveled from place to place along the highways and byways of Germany; he adopted fantastic titles, held men spellbound, was warned against by pious people as a tempter plying his arts in connivance with the Evil One. The *Volksbuch* makes him a magician and necromancer, to whom all manner of accomplishments and pretensions are ascribed. In these confused and graceless ascriptions, Dr. Faustus takes on eagle's wings to fly through heaven and earth, to wrest from God the secret of things hidden. To achieve his end, he concludes a pact with Satan. The contract stipulates that the devil be subject and obedient to Faust

in all he desires and requests; that he reveal to him whatever he wishes to know.

The beginning of Faust's pact with Mephistopheles reads: "I, Johann Faustus D., confess with my own hand publicly, as a confirmation and by authority of this writing, that I had undertaken to experiment with the supernatural. And since among the gifts which are granted me and graciously imparted to me from above there is no such ability, nor is it to be found in my head; and since I can not learn it from man, I have delivered myself to the present spirit, dispatched to me, which calls himself Mephistopheles, a servant of the prince of hell."¹⁴ Faust wants to know and understand the mysteries concealed in heaven and on earth. Neither he nor any man can fathom them, for God has not revealed their meaning, and it is His wish, so the Middle Ages concluded, that they remain hidden forever from man's view. He who sets out to explore the unrevealed mystery here and above, openly defies and denies God. In accordance with this view, Faust's soul is in the end transported to hell. Thus this slender book proclaims that immoderate striving for knowledge brings man's soul to destruction.

With Faust all humanists believed that God wants to be known: that God put man into this world that the world might lend its aid in seeking Him; that only through critical, discriminative thinking in respect to world and nature could God be approached and apprehended. Reasoning thus, Paracelsus confidently deduced that God reveals Himself in His works. And Conrad Celtis groped for that vision which eye has not seen: "Oh, that I might behold heaven's fiery glow, that I might know the genesis of earth, wind, mist, and snow. Oh, that I might find thee, Father of All, by whom the illimitable world is founded and whose slightest nod will some day return it to chaos."¹⁵

Paracelsus was certain that God reveals His secrets and makes known His divine laws, if He is truly sought. And let rational man never lose sight of the fact "That God, moved by great love of the stars, created the microcosmos that the mystery of the stars be revealed, not on account of the stars alone, whose secrets are to be made manifest through man's work, but also in order that all natural mysteries be revealed. . . . God desires that all things

invisible become visible . . . that it be man's daily exercise to seek out the secrets of nature. . . ."16 For it is man's task to learn to know things and not be blind in them; man was created for the purpose of speaking of the wondrous works of God, and God created nothing that man can not explore. Paracelsus established this doctrine of man's relation to the universe and nature on biblical foundation: "For what have we on earth except only to walk in God's creation and increase in its knowledge? And not to walk in those things which are not the works of God. And these are divided into the works of nature, which *philosophia* comprises, and into the works of Christ, which *theologia* encompasses, in these we are to pass the time which is given us on earth."17 The will to probe and to raise the veil from nature was not presumption in Paracelsus, nor was it an arrogant reaching out for that which is forbidden of God. The pursuit of knowledge was to Paracelsus one way of response to God's command: "Seek ye the truth," learn to know God in His works, in nature.

But what is the way to the recognition of God in His works? John Wyclif had spoken of two lights, the light of nature, and the light of grace. Erasmus called reason the light of nature. For Paracelsus this term did not refer to the natural gifts of man, but the light of nature was to him a way, a method of inquiry. "Which is the right door to medicine: through Avicennum, Galenum, Mesue, Phasim, etc., or through the light of nature? For there are two doors, one is found in painted books, the other in nature. Doesn't it stand to reason, dear reader, that there has been a mistake as to which is the right door, which is not? Namely that the right door is the light of nature, the other way is the same as climbing in through the roof."18 The one, the wrong method is the one that engages in speculation of mind and fantasy, useless and worthless; the correct one experiments, touches things, observes with the eyes. Truth abides in experience; speculations can not endure.

Interpret the symbol, said Paracelsus, find the way to the inner heaven of God by penetrating to the "heaven" lying within outer nature. Certainly the star of Bethlehem proceeded from the inner, though it was visible only in the outer heavens. For the God of Paracelsus is the "*quinta essentia*," the effective force in the uni-

verse, in things; or, as expressed by Copernicus, God is the causal "Law" of physical occurrence. Thus the philosophy of the laboratory of this sixteenth century was impelled by the desire to know God. God is made manifest in the "laws" of a mechanistic universe, according to rules established by reason, arrived at by way of logic.

Nicolaus Copernicus Seeks God in Nature's Laws

This phase of Humanism is well illustrated in the intellectual career of the humanist-mathematician and Prussian astronomer, Nicolaus Copernicus, or Kopernik, 1473-1543. He was born in Thorn, West Prussia, most likely of German descent. His family name seems to be derived from the German Silesian town of Köppernig, "a place of copper."¹⁹ These were the years of German immigration toward the East, the years when German was spoken and written in Cracow, when no Pole was admitted to the patriciate of Thorn. Copernicus was sent to the University of Cracow, recently become eminent in mathematics and astronomy. Though trigonometric calculations were for Copernicus and for his teacher Regiomontanus in Cracow a way to knowledge, to the "laws," to the unrevealed mystery, they actually prepared the way for Kepler, Newton, quantitative theories, and the theory of relativity. They initiated the era of mathematical calculations.

For the sake of "knowledge" Copernicus studied mathematics and astronomy at Cracow and pursued juristic studies in Bologna and Rome. It is significant that whereas culture had in the Middle Ages emanated in the main from a non-scientific, super-university fountainhead in Pope, Church Council, and Church, the university now came to be the source of learning for the people. The university led in the revolt against the authority of the Church. Even as Wyclif, the English reformer, had taught at Oxford, so Jan Hus had been a professor at the University of Prague; Luther, Doctor of Holy Scriptures, was a professor at the University of Wittenberg. To be sure, his enemy, Dr. Eck, so staunch in his loyalty to the Roman Church, taught at the University of Ingolstaedt.

Copernicus, however, did not continue in a university career, but was called to positions of responsibility in the Roman Church, and was finally made administrator of the monastic

chapter at Frauenburg. He had studied jurisprudence, medicine, philosophy, but not theology. And so, despite his canon's frock and canon's duties, he thought of himself not as a churchman but as a learned man of the world. Though he was the overseer of a Roman bishopric, the movement of the Reformation apparently did not disturb him. For did not Rheticus, a professor at the University of Wittenberg, hence a follower of Luther, sit as a student at the feet of Copernicus, and no question was raised by either the Roman canon or the Lutherist professor? The right to seek after knowledge had become inviolable, and it would occur to no one to hinder it; for honest inquiry, pure learning, were to these men a hallowed right. Therefore the Lutherist scientist could come to the Roman mathematician, and the Lutheran minister Osslander in the Evangelical city of Nürnberg could print the work of Copernicus though it was dedicated to the Pope.

The Right to Seek Elevates Man

While Copernicus raised scientific study to a position of esteem, he did not believe that he thereby degraded God. Copernicus saw God as the Master Builder, the cause and creator of the best and most orderly "*machina mundi*." The cosmos is a machine, whose course is directed by laws establishing and maintaining harmony. To find the laws is to come nearer their meaning, thus nearer their Master and Maker. In one of his early books, *De revolutionibus orbium caelestium*, Concerning the Movement of Heavenly Bodies, Copernicus said: "Among the many and varied studies of learning and the arts, by which the human mind develops, I consider those concerned with objects most excellent and worth knowing, most deserving of being pursued with great zeal. There are those that treat of the motion of heavenly bodies, the course of the stars, their magnitude and distances, their rise and setting, also the cause of other celestial bodies, and finally the development of the entire system. And what is more beautiful than the heavens, which contain all beauty? . . . If however it is the purpose of all learning to withdraw the human spirit from sin and to direct it to the better things, then [mathematics] can do this full well, and in addition

effect an incredible felicity of soul. For who, in the research into that which he recognizes as founded on the best order and directed by Divine Providence, would not by diligent observation of the same and by a thorough acquaintance with it, be incited toward the best and to admiration of the Cause of the All? Wherein does all happiness and all good lie? In vain would the divine singer say that he rejoices in God's creation and that he rejoices in the works of His hands, if he were not led by this means, as if in a chariot, to the vision of the Most High."²⁰ Copernicus would seek Him by endeavoring to understand His works; find the "laws," and perhaps His thinking and His will may be discovered. And though the Cause, the Builder, the Mover may not speak in words or in a written book, He does communicate of Himself in the endless depth and in the infinite space through which He charts the course of His planets.

Copernicus did not arrive at this concept through mathematical calculations. The equation but proved the thought by means of observation and a process of reasoning. The law evolved as the result of reasoning, and Copernicus beheld the universe as more than a mechanical course and concourse of equations come together. He beheld the perfection and harmony manifesting the laws and principles which his intellect sought to formulate. And he beheld that the universe was more than a mechanical adjustment to laws. It stood in splendor as the most perfect expression of the Creator. Man can only think, or try to think God's thoughts after Him. God alone translates His thinking into doing.

Thus man felt elevated and exalted, for he began to realize that a mighty, immeasurable, incredible power resides in his intellect. He knew he was following after God. Copernicus undertook to discover the reason for the movements of the planets. He devised trigonometry as an instrument in his search for God. In order that he might comprehend the Incomprehensible, Copernicus explored the motion, the cause, the plan, the system, for he was persuaded that once he knew all this, he would have attained to knowledge concerning the outermost and the innermost — which is God. The pride, the self-confidence of a Copernicus, Paracelsus, and Faust lay in their ability to think; and they rejoiced in their strength, for now nothing seemed im-

possible to the mind. The world must yield answer to their queries. Yet this undaunted confidence in man himself, which dared storm the gates of heaven and even to make pacts with the agent of hell, must forever end in bafflement. For they who thus seek, may arrive at theories, and even laws, but the Cause, the Builder will remain forever hidden.

Seeking God in His Creation

Since God Himself could not be comprehended, these seekers sought Him in His creation. Thus in this age, still bound to the faith of the Middle Ages, lay the beginning of an endeavor to find God in "things" and thereby the meaning of life. Sebastian Franck, Paracelsus, Celtis, Copernicus gazed upon the God of Creation, the God who brings forth forest and daybreak, dawn and star, who is the dawn and the soaring and song of the bird. Unconsciously they emphasized a new aspect of God, who through the Middle Ages had been the God who hates sin and requires repentance, whose Last Judgment will judge the quick and the dead.

Why should God the Creator, God present in forest, daybreak, bird, and star, be thus stressed at this particular moment, at the beginning of the sixteenth century? Interpretations of the historical process as implied in such terms as causal, psychological, economic, pragmatic, do not suffice. Historical happenings appear ever more obscure and discomfiting, all presumptuous knowing stands humbled before an incomprehensible, deeper source, a compulsion behind historical happenings more mysterious and powerful than economic interests or policies of state. Why should the will to knowledge seek out the God of Creation instead of deepening Christian possessions? Was it the urge toward the perfection demanded by Christ: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect"? Was it not the thought that to know God in His outer manifestation denotes participation in the essence that He is, and that the sharing of His spirit and essence must mean increase in perfection? Immersion in the greatness of His work brings nearer to His Holy Spirit, imbues with the feeling of humility and helplessness, and yet lifts up to heights beyond all perception and imagining, beyond all *reason*

itself. Thus the deeper the delving in the creation of God the greater the felicity.

The Middle Ages had declared nature the handiwork of God, but nature did not raise her voice on her own behalf, nor was she there for her own sake. It fell to the lot of the physician Paracelsus to seek out the force, the laws in things; to Luther, the theologian, to rejoice in the Creator, continuously creative and creating, present in the blossoms of the cherry tree, in the waving grain, filling the waters with teeming life; and to Copernicus, the astronomer, to dare to approach the Incomprehensible One in mathematical formulas. In the contemplation of nature all three beheld the countenance of the unfathomable God. Unconsciously they expressed the transitional, the new thinking, the new era which will eventually depersonalize God and let Him be comprehended in laws. In all sincerity these men of genius sought Him out and attempted to express Him even inadequately: Copernicus saw His majesty in the cosmic order, Paracelsus named Him the "*arcanum*," the vital secret of nature, Luther praised the activity of God in the wondrous works of His creation. All of these were an approach to God felt anew as God the Immeasurable, the Incomprehensible.

The burgher culture which was now assuming leadership, was and continued to be characterized by an intellectual attitude. This burgher era, in the making in the sixteenth century, will be characterized in the succeeding centuries by definite concepts of individual dignity, freedom, tolerance, by the Faustian will to know, by the certainty that *reason* is the measure of things. The intellect will grapple with innumerable problems, however diverse and contradictory, and after four hundred and fifty years of discoveries reaching into the heavens above, the earth below, and the waters round about will exclaim that it has conquered, only to find itself on the brink of destruction.

It was the *Faustbuch* which pilloried these seekers who gave their lives for the sake of finding truth. By putting their trust in the power of man's mind, they reached beyond that, which according to the Middle Ages, God desired man to know. The *Faustbuch* makes it plain: God has set bounds to man's inquiry, and Dr. Faustus bartered his soul away when he sought to know

that which concerns the "*elementa*," that is, heavenly and divine things. Paracelsus on the other hand was convinced that God has endowed man with reason that he might judge that which he sees, and judging, come to know who God is and no longer grope for Him in uncertain surmise, but lay hold of Him through accurate knowledge.

Even Scholasticism in the Middle Ages had endeavored to prove the truths of faith by appeal to the truths of reason. But reason had grown bolder now. It exalted the dignity of man and set out to find truth not by way of faith, this free gift of God, but by way of human reason and its toil and effort. Objective knowledge must count, examine, and measure. And if the God of Copernicus, who writes His laws in the firmament, seems afar off, Copernicus nonetheless exulted in having come nearer Him in his trigonometric symbols and his mathematical rules.

The way which the humanists of the sixteenth century chose is also a way. The injunction, long ago formulated, was a valid command for them: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."²¹ Because they trusted in Him they used the mind and the intellect which He had given that they might find Him. Not that they lacked faith of the heart. Precisely their belief in God directed their research, for He commanded that man seek Him. Seeking out His meaning in His works is seeking Him and coming nearer Him. Their faith accepted that the way of knowledge is a way to God. The words of Copernicus declare this faith; they declare also that it is man's duty to use his high, God-given capabilities: "Wherein does all happiness and all good lie? In vain would the divine singer say that he rejoices in God's creation and that he rejoices in the works of His hands, if he were not led by this means of research . . . to the vision of the Most-High."²⁰

This was the beginning, a very hesitant beginning, of establishing a *Weltanschauung* upon the explanation of objects. The day will come in centuries following the sixteenth when burgher-humanistic thinking will accept the laws as truth. Heaven will recede into boundless and fathomless space, and humanistic thinking will concede to immortality the possibility of continuance

in matter only. At the end of the nineteenth century positivistic philosophy will establish that the world is but a system of mechanical laws, and the twentieth century will employ technical laws for the purpose of self-destruction. From the sixteenth century on, laws will be emphasized; the state will be based on contract and maintained according to clear, juristic formulas and laws; the manor, the acre will be forsaken for capital, equipped with and regulated by laws. Opposition to the natural law in man will be regarded as tyranny. And the bearer of this new era will be the burgher, the middle class. This humanistic, scientific, burgher-culture will in the end "lean on its own understanding" and will consider truth to be relative, continually changing.

But He, the Eternal, Almighty, Absolute One and Triune God, cannot be compressed into such concepts as laws and relativity, for He is the Hidden One, the Holy One, nameless and unfathomable, the "*Deus absconditus*" with whom this sixteenth century will wrestle in Luther. This century laid the foundation for the culture of the intellect in Humanism; but it built also for the culture of the spirit in the Reformation. All other manifestations of this culture, whether political, economic, or sociological, were secondary in the struggles of the sixteenth century. Indeed, they remained secondary in succeeding centuries. The dominating ideas and ideals will be those begotten in this century in the acceptance of humanistic ideals on the one hand, and, on the other, in the revolution wrought in the soul of the monk in Wittenberg.

CHAPTER III

RENAISSANCE ART

Form out of Chaos

EFFORTS IN THE REALM OF THE VISIBLE

The Renaissance, having accumulated a vast intellectual treasure, surveyed these riches so powerful and engaging in man and his works, and established that the purpose of life is found in culture. And the precept of culture is that man seek perfection in the world that is here and now. Conceding that this "here and now" is but a series of fleeting moments and impressions, these impressions might nonetheless be very real and very buoyant; and in their reality and buoyancy they demand inquiry as to how these actual, momentary impressions might be made to yield their utmost.

The question was: How can human problems, their conflicts, turbulent strivings and uncertainties find solution? Where can the most perfect kind of life be found? The Renaissance answered that life must be given largely to those stimuli which excite the senses and affect men pleasurably, namely, to literature and art; for the products of the imagination present the most perfect and attractive form of life. Just as the injunction of the Reformation will be, "Be ye perfect" in the blessedness of inner vision, so the Renaissance projected the vision of perfect men and things into the external world of appearance. And in Renaissance art this represented the aspiration for a sensitive and disciplined appreciation of the finer characteristics of sensation, intellect, and emotion.

The Middle Ages had posited the supreme ambiguity that man, though living in this God-given and God-created world, served Him best by fleeing it. Renaissance art accepted man as he is found in this same world and depicted the beauty that is his in design and form. Human bodies, seen in the light of classical antiquity, were delineated in stern strictness of structure and composition according to geometric-stereometric laws, and in conformity with classical calm and moderation. But Renaissance artists were convinced, over and beyond this, that the human body, touched and beautified by the soul within, ought to be

shown to be the dwelling place, the veritable temple of the soul's transfiguring spirit.

Upon this foundation the Renaissance, in Italy and in Germany, achieved heights of productiveness in the realm of art, which constituted this sixteenth century almost a parallel to that most classic century of all — the century of Greek enlightenment. The artist, spurred on by classical Humanism, committed himself to diligent study of perspective, of nature, of man, and therewith of his anatomy. Gradually, with the absorption of antique thought, pagan subjects were added to the earlier Christian motives, and Christian subjects were treated in a manner wholly profane. The paintings of Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Cellini, the architecture of Bramante, though inspired by classical antecedents, were genial products of the Renaissance. The study of classical antiquity was potent, but the artistic creativity was pre-eminently the work of emancipated genius infused and enlightened by the greatness of the past. The art of Italian Renaissance was an apocalypse of the beauty of man and the world, spontaneous, joyous, sensuous, fired by a pure delight in loveliness and harmony.

Splendid in its religious aura, Renaissance art beheld man detached from the collective whole, separate, exalted, free, and therefore held accountable in his relation to world and God. It saw him emerged from a subjective self, ennobled and idealized, a chosen one, autonomous, altogether of the earth, and yet lifted up from the earth. In this High Renaissance art, particularly in Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Dürer, the individual, aware of his divine and human heritage, found himself face to face with both the relative and absolute, with the particular and the universal.

The individual soars in happy balance in Raphael, a painter whom Goethe found most endued with the Greek spirit; Titian and Holbein present the world of nobility; while in Correggio the grace that is man's melts elegantly, exquisitely into the whole — painters all of the static, heightened moment of being. In the dynamic art of the Renaissance, religious awe agitates color and serpentine line in a Grünewald, or a terror-struck pallor bespeaks fear and reverence in an El Greco; in a Dürer and in the Promethean art of a Michelangelo the dynamism of ethical self-conquest breaks forth.

The sixteenth century scientist, observing nature at work in astrology, black magic, and alchemy, hoped to penetrate to the mystery of life in one brilliant, clairvoyant instant of knowing and seeing. The artist aspired to fix in a moment of vision the well-springs of man's thousand experiences that are joy and sorrow. Paracelsus delved in mines and in nature's vast storehouse to find the living seed, the subtlest recess and operation of God's immanence, seeking Him out who transcends all manifestation. The Italian Leonardo da Vinci, 1452-1519, also turned to nature in his search for the *elixir vitae* that transmutes the moment and makes it peerless.

Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo was not merely the logician and mathematician whose design weighs and measures man's organic body, whose composition is subject to geometric rule; he not only labored as an alchemist to give permanence to the most delicate nuances and subtleties of painting: he was a student of nature who sought out her strange and choice moments of revelation, the declaration of her foundation and temper. He saw the green dusk in grotto, crag, and cavern, the drifting clouds that creep into men's lives. For it was from nature that he arrived at man. He explored the sorcery behind nature's manifestation, he divined in it the magic that fashions man's expression, and his deftness translated to his canvas that intimate presence so elusive, so remote, so baffling.

Leonardo was above all a painter of portraits. He painted faces that are pleasing to the eye, images of idealized reality: faultless grace, ethereal delicacy, exquisite beauty suffused by a mystical haze. They reflect the experiences of all humankind. In an illumined moment he saw into man; he sounded the voiceless depths within, the silent sheeting of hidden waters more delicate and lovely than the play of shadows over trembling leaves. But though there is beauty in the oval countenance there lurks in it a trace of evil too. It is suggested faintly in the smile, despite the perfect balance of color, proportion, and the skilled disposition of light and shadow. Man, human, is good and evil; but above all he possesses a symmetry of form that is transfigured by the sheer beauty of the light of the spirit.

His women, most of all the *Mona Lisa*, the *St. Anne*, and to

a lesser degree, the *Madonna of the Rocks*, are woven about with delicate mists that veil, that enshrine and remove to a select and exclusive apartness. The sitting posture is made the placid expression of an informed revelation, a glimpsing of the nature and the meaning of things. The human race, in its collective blessedness and sin, is concentrated in the aristocratic face of Mona Lisa. There is a remoteness and conscious aloofness in the tint of the flesh and the contour of the face; a surmise that here are come together the thoughts, the passions, and reveries of all the world. The eyes and hands and smile are laden with the inexplicable and secret, with something extraordinarily captivating and refined, but with something sinister withal. For Mona Lisa's outward repose contrasts with the scepticism revealed in her glance, in her smile, a scepticism grown out of the paganism, intellectualism, and sensuousness that were once Greece, out of the craving and splendor, the guilt and power that were once Rome.

Leonardo's faces appear almost as visions, concentrating in themselves the classical simplicity, serenity, perfection, self-containment of Greece. St. Anne, well acquainted with man's grief and the cause thereof, wears a gentle smile; in all the turbulence and conceit of man's dependence upon his own strength one instant of knowing has revealed to her the prophetic vision of the Middle Ages with its all-enfolding, inscrutable, all-forgiving love. A moment's beholding of the being and experience of man, the knowledge of sin and death, of beauty, suffering, rhapsody, love are compacted in the lineaments of a face, and this knowing hovers like tremulous wings over eyelids and hands.

Leonardo's famous Last Supper was painted on a plastered wall in the refectory of the monastery adjacent to the Dominican Church of St. Mary of the Graces in Milan. The twelve disciples, grouped by threes, are agitated by one thought and one emotion. Their gestures, their hands convey fear, doubt, expectation, affection. Their one concern is the Redeemer, about to enter upon the days of His passion and death. He is alone. His hands are outstretched before Him on the table. One hand is open. He is revealing to them the guilt of all mankind: "One of you shall betray me."¹ The other hand is half closed. It is not given to

man to fathom the mystery of God. But here is the Son of Man, the Man of Sorrows, preparing to go the way as it was determined from eternity, eliciting from each of his followers the cry, "Master, is it I?"¹ Thirteen figures appear today a harmony of men and emotions on the wall. Time and dampness have set them as into a mist. The Saviour appears faintest of all, soft as a wafted breath, clad in a flame-red robe, the sacrificial Lamb. Time and the elements have not been able to efface the power and message of Leonardo's great work: *Ecce Homo*, this is the way, the solution.

Michelangelo

Michelangelo Buonarroti, 1475-1564, the Dionysian, intoxicated with beauty, but unable to contain himself within the bounds of measured serenity, stands a contrast to the classical calm of Leonardo, the thinker, the restrained dreamer and portrayer of beauty. Glory and tragedy inhere in all greatness, for in its very nature greatness grows beyond its age; its present struggles toward deliverance from the past and at the same time it is being driven toward the future. This is the tragic greatness of Michelangelo. In him the Renaissance, this rebirth to the temporal and finite, shattered the hold of the Late Gothic in its reach toward the infinite. Fascinated, he explored this varied and throbbing life of time and space. But satisfied with neither this world nor with his emancipated humanity, Michelangelo reached forward toward that power and grandeur, that tension between the Gothic and the Renaissance, which was the Baroque. In the end he returned to the absolute dominant in the Baroque as well as in the Gothic.

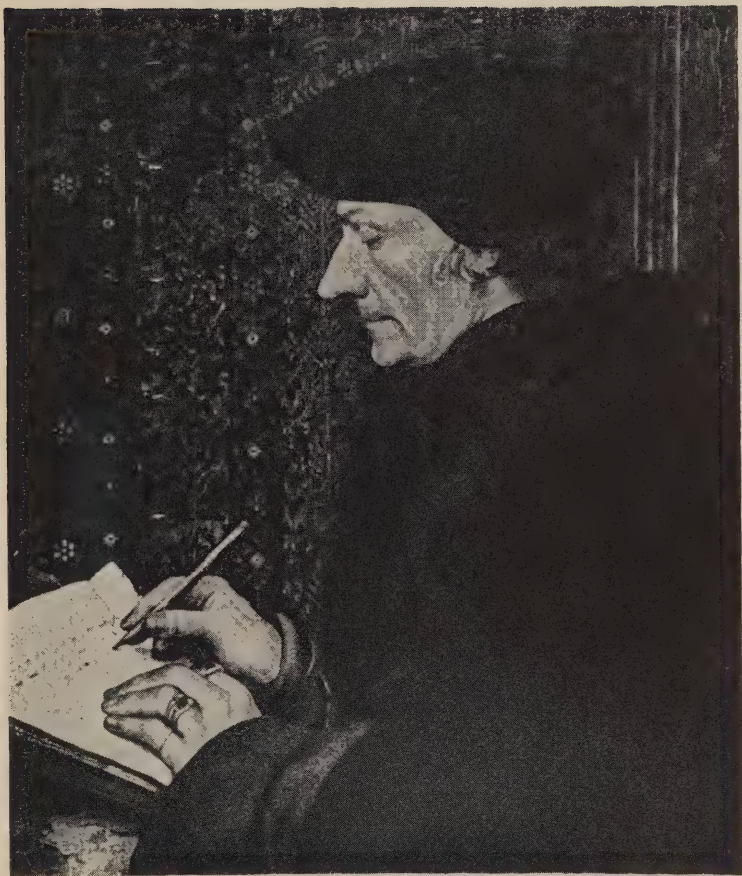
Thus his figures, sufficient unto themselves and yet insufficient, are enamoured of the earth while they aspire to heaven. Michelangelo sought to penetrate to that essence at the center of being, which conceived the world; to discover and to reveal the spirit activating the inception of the universe. And in his quest he came upon man, and he saw him in his nakedness as he came from the hand of the Creator. Adam was made "in His own image, after His likeness:"² He formed him "of the dust of the ground, and he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul": body and soul, perfect in the divine

substance of being, incomparable in beauty of form. But the beauty and the perfection were lost and therewith the innocent naturalness of that nakedness. Fallen man stands in the way of man, conceived in the Creator's image. But the more nearly the genius of Michelangelo united the "beauty" of outer form with the "breath" of God, the more nearly was the intent of God made visible.

And so, Michelangelo's "man," both hero and titan, stands before his Creator in all his greatness and glory, for the spark of life comes from Him. In this felt kinship all earthly measure was set aside, and the artist distended the form to superhuman proportions and created his Sybils and Prophets, the Medici, and Moses thrown into great rage at the sight of the adoration of the golden calf. But Moses is still adorned with taper-like "beams of light," owned by him who has just stood in the presence of Jehovah, the Giver of Law. Michelangelo's triumphant David is a Goliath beside the childlike David of a Donatello or a Verrocchio of the previous century. Incomparable power and beauty are expressed in the Christ, the Judge in the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel. But it is clear that Michelangelo's daemonic soul could not but defy the laws and burst the limitations of corporeal bounds. He the individual is compelled to break with the individual when he is driven forward toward the total, the absolute. For Michelangelo sought to give form not only to the human body in its finiteness, but also to the infinite, the spark of God in man. Glorious as man is as man, he is greatest of all when he touches the finger of God. Michelangelo was, in Goethe's words, great, because he could not finish; because to the classical completeness and completion in itself was added the unending yearning of romanticism. Michelangelo harbored romanticism's melancholy, that solitude of the soul over-shadowed by hour and thought, that unending love for the timeless and eternal. He embodied the supreme synthesis of classic symmetry and simplicity with the boundless infinite of the romantic.

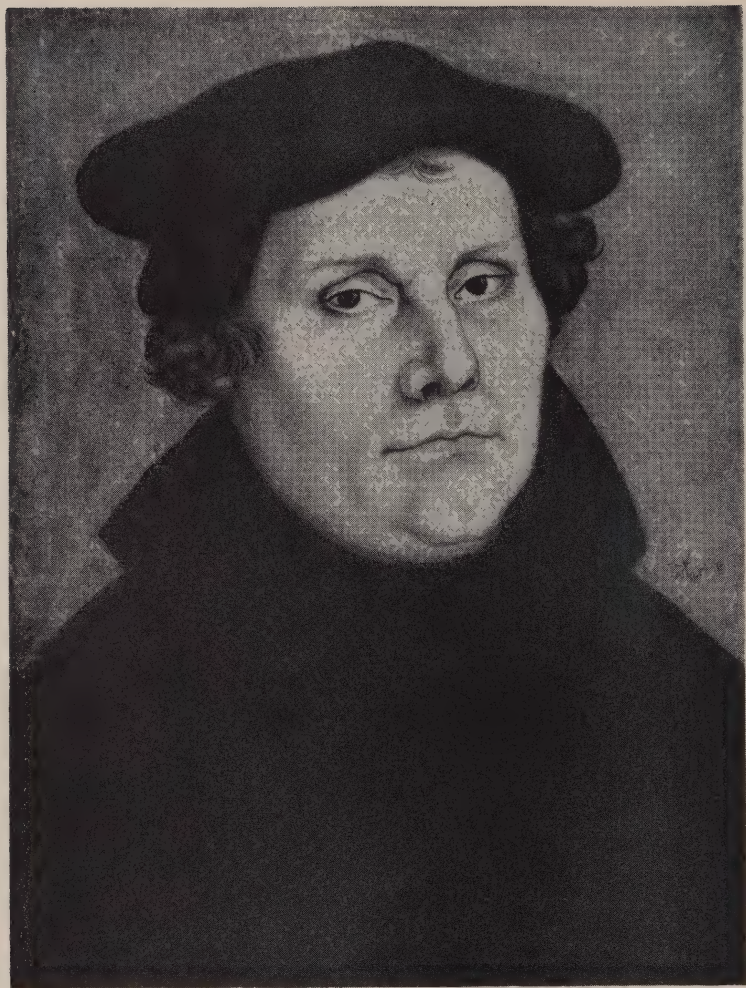
CLASSICAL INFLUENCE IN GERMANY

While Italy sought to solve the problems of the age through the symbolic world of art, German genius faced the same prob-



(Courtesy of Macmillan and Company, London)

Erasmus. Portrait by Hans Holbein.



(Courtesy of Propyläen-Verlag, Berlin)

Martin Luther about 1530. Portrait by Lukas Cranach the Elder.



(Courtesy of Verlag Des Druckhauses. Tempelhof, vormals Deutscher Verlag, Rechtsnachfolger des Propyläen-Verlag, Berlin)

Rest on Flight to Egypt. Painting by Lucas Cranach.



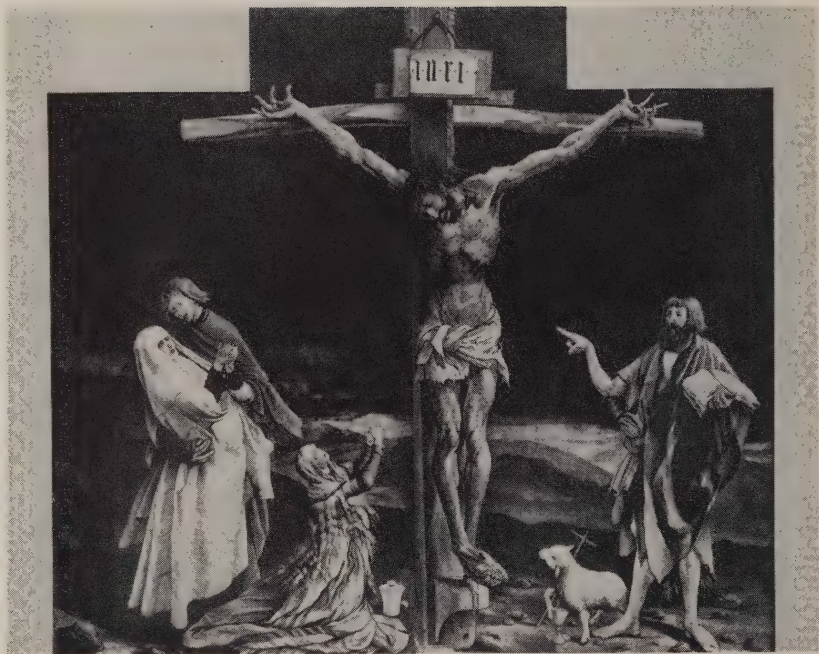
(Courtesy of National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection)

Knight, Death and Devil. Copperplate Engraving
by Albrecht Dürer.



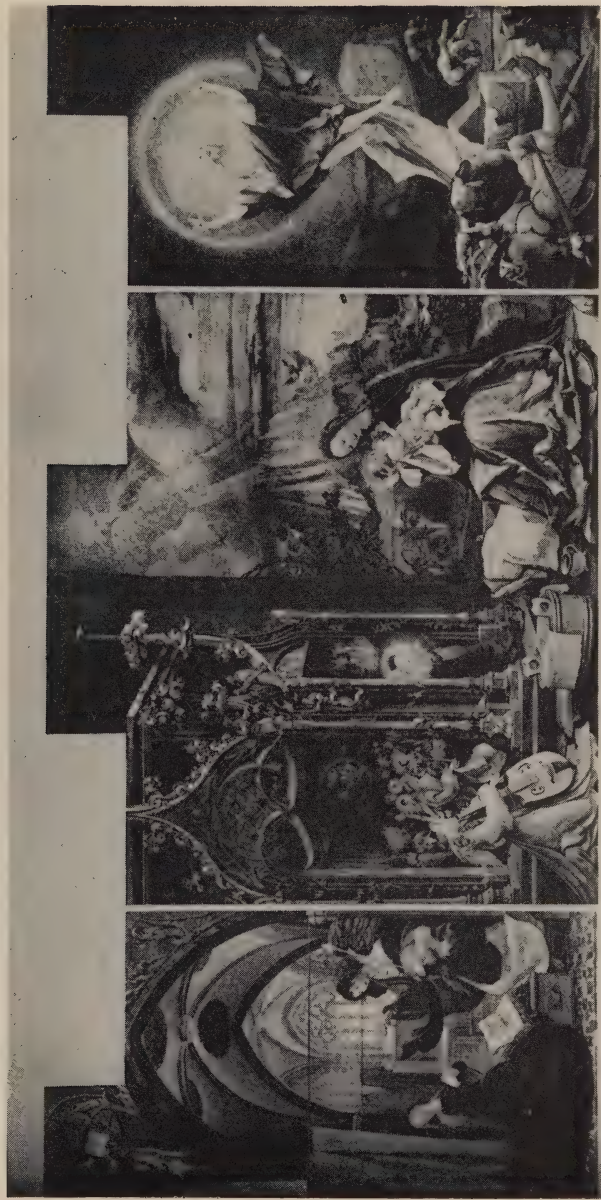
(Courtesy of Verlag Des Druckhauses, Tempelhof, vormals Deutscher Verlag, Rechtsnachfolger des Propyläen-Verlag, Berlin)

Mountain Landscape. Painting by Albrecht Altdorfer.



(Courtesy of Angelsachsen-Verlag, Bremen)

Isenheim Altar — The Crucifixion.
Painting by Matthias Grünewald.



(Courtesy of Angellsachsen-Verlag, Bremen)

Isenheim Altar — Annunciation, Birth, Resurrection.
Painting by Matthias Grünewald.



(Courtesy of Macmillan and Company, London)

The Four Apostles. Painting by Albrecht Dürer.

lems. Whereas Italian art stressed beauty, balance, and harmony in composition, German art, in keeping with its classical temperament, was a side-by-side of Late Gothic and Renaissance, with the emphasis on content, fantasy, feeling. Art in Germany therefore very seldom achieved clarity of composition in the sense of antiquity or Italy. Renaissance art in Germany was however the art of a virile, high-minded generation, already mature when Luther posted his Ninety-five Theses on October 31, 1517. No longer bound to the traditional ecclesiastical subjects, the artist created an art that filled the void left by the absence of great literary works. Dürer's *Passions*, Grünewald's *Isenheimer Altar*, Holbein's *Dance of Death* speak an ethical-religious language.

Albrecht Dürer — the Protestant

Albrecht Dürer of Nürnberg, 1471-1528, was a product of the Renaissance as well as of the Reformation; he was both classical and romantic. From his mathematically constructed *Adam and Eve* to the defeated quest of his *Melencolia*, from the stormy *Apokalypse* to the measured precision of the *Four Apostles*, style was but the outer evidence of a struggle of man, alone, in his high encounter with ethical and spiritual responsibility. His conviction that harmonious beauty must be wed to reason tied Dürer to the Italian Renaissance. "Correctness" there must be, there must be "beauty," and that means perspective and proportion. Theory and technique but aid in the mastery of the manner, but the purpose of manner is to express content. He realized that perfect harmony between form and content is unattainable, because its ultimate remains inaccessible to human thinking. He wrote: "No man on earth could say definitely what the most beautiful form of man is. No one knows that save God alone."³ Out of theory and inwardness, out of Renaissance and Late Gothic Dürer charted his own course. Though man does not have a perfect form, he is the vessel of the Eternal, and this fact he had to portray.

Dürer's woodcuts are remarkable in the development of a purely linear style on a three-dimensional basis. Things in nature are masses, not lines, yet Dürer represented solid objects as well as

light and shadow, whirling clouds, sunlight and twilight in lines, each distinct and effective. Not the figure alone gives beauty to the whole, but the design of the perpetual weaving of the lines which entwine the figure. The clear outline of the subject constitutes the classical strength of the woodcut; it constitutes the point of constancy in a maze of thought, fervor, and action. The relative and the absolute united in black lines are Dürer's answer to a perplexed age.

THE APOKALYPSE

In the woodcut *Apokalypse*, made before 1498, the four mail-clad apocalyptic riders, avenging angels of slaughter, storm through the world: war, famine, death, destruction in their hands. They spare none, neither king nor wealth, nor monk, nor woman. St. John's *Apokalypse*, the *Book of Revelation*, was a fruitful source for Dürer's northern fantasy. Full of hidden meaning, yet a revelation, the images crowd by like rolling clouds, their outline constantly changing. Dürer selected the images grounded in natural phenomena; for this conflict between heaven and earth produces a tumult of all the elements; amid a shower of meteors and a rain of fire, these chastising messengers of God fall upon a lost mankind.

The Virgin Mary with the Christ Child was represented in Christian art early in the second century; but the subject was not a common one till the first Council of Ephesus, 431, declared Mary to be the Mother of God. Dürer bowed to tradition in his *Marienleben*, The Life of Mary, the last significant expression of the Mary cult in art. But Dürer's madonna is no longer religiously significant as in earlier art. With the Renaissance the naive anthropomorphism of popular religion was abrogated, Mary the Mother became a human woman.

The theme Mary and Child was gradually relinquished in German art; a substitute was found in the Passion of Christ. The High Renaissance in Italy ignored it. German piety demanded it. Dürer's *Passion* included three complete cycles in woodcut, copper plate engravings, and drawings. To Dürer the Passion connoted the suffering imposed by the inescapable hour of de-

cision. The choice between heaven and the love of earth has to be made.

CHRIST IN GETHSEMANE

In the fifteenth century it was the physical suffering of a broken and helpless Christ that excited compassion. The *Pietà* of that century outdid itself in evoking harrowing grief and commiseration with the victim of man's brutality. By contrast Dürer's Christ is a hero, a conqueror. Physical suffering is present, but it is the outer sign of the inner struggle, the victory of the Son of God within the Son of Man. Again and again Dürer depicted *Christus am Ölberg*, Christ in Gethsemane. It is always night, there are three who sleep, one who kneels in prayer, alone. The great etching of 1515 gives monumental form to Christ, the Son of God, whose soul's battle has been resolved in self-mastery. Only his hands move quickly in a light, parrying gesture toward the cup offered by the angel visible in the clouds. The stormy nightwind twists and defoliates an olive tree nearby, fretted and gnarled by the persistent forces of life and death, a reflection of the storm in the soul of the kneeling one: "Father, if Thou wilt, take this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done."⁴

An earlier woodcut of about 1498 shows Christ kneeling, an humble, terrified yet reverent Son of Man, his hands, delineated with Dürer's surpassing eloquence, are raised as if to push from him the cup the angel proffers him, yet still as if in adoration. His robe falls in irregular folds. The landscape is uneven, rough, as are the figures of the disciples in their huddled angular posture, all four merged with and a part of a bitter, hostile nature. In this early woodcut Dürer penetrates to that source in this God-Man, — "God so loved the world"⁵ — whence flows a piercing agony and a searching tenderness, and from which issues that mighty struggle that disrupts and fractures the human spirit: the autonomous One, alone, in the hour of supreme decision!

The same theme was depicted with unsparing severity in a pen-and-ink sketch made in 1521. Jesus lies prostrate on the ground, his arms outstretched in the form of a cross. It is again the conflict between natural fear and surrender to a higher will. Antaeus-like,

the whole body once more clasps the earth in the hopeless hope of drawing strength from her for the final sacrifice. But though the Son of Man sinks to the earth a shaken body, the Son of God will arise with steadfast soul, to triumph on the cross: "It is finished."⁶

No other art of this period so graphically portrayed the close relation of the creaturehood of man to nature, none other reached the ethical depth, none other so sharply focused contemplation and decision except the language of Luther. A voice from above, a clinging to earth, the solitariness of this Sovereign One, the mystery of death, choice and decision, inner freedom; all of this in simple lines, black and white. Perhaps the tersest treatment of this theme appeared on the title page of *Die Kleine Passion*: The Man of Sorrows is seated on a rock, lost in thought over the sin of the world, the need of reconciliation, the way He must go. Dürer's ideal of Christ, like that of Luther, is manly and heroic. He who beholds Him is stirred with deep and passionate emotion, and yet in His presence there is fulfillment, strength, and spontaneous exaltation. To the Greeks, Apollo could be nothing less than embodied beauty; similarly, Dürer thought of Christ the Lord, the most beautiful of all. And so his Christ breathes sweetness and sublimity in a comely form, unmarred by either scourging or ignominious degradation.

THREE IMAGINATIVE ENGRAVINGS

Ritter, Tod und Teufel, Knight, Death, and Devil, 1513, was the first of three engravings, imaginative expressions of symbolic art: "masterpieces of the greatest mind which ever expressed itself in this form of art."⁷ An incident, significant and impressive in itself, conveys a second meaning. A knight on horseback in full armor, with open visor, is riding through a rocky gorge. Two ghostly companions, Death and the Devil, are at his side. The knight looks neither to the right nor to the left. He need not, for his decision has been made, his way is clear. He is composed, tranquil, not because of the protection afforded by his coat of mail, for man-made weapons are of no avail against demon or devil. The coat of mail, the erect posture of the rider, point to the freedom and assurance born of spiritual security. An inward invincibility renders

this solitary rider in the dark defile as impregnable as the sunlit citadel of safety on the distant height.

In contrast to the confidence and freedom of the knight, the *Melencolia*, 1514, the second of the engravings, asks in hopeless doubt, "Is there a way out of man's eternal quandary, is there an answer to the unanswerable?" A woman, larger than humankind, is sitting amid a confusion of mathematical and mechanical instruments. She seems larger than all space about her. She is winged, but the wings hang listlessly. The laurel wreath in her hair is a mockery. Dispirited, she leans her head upon her hand. The open book in her lap, the compass with which her hand toys, the sphere fallen to the floor, emblematic of perfection itself, the rainbow, the arc of peace, to the right, are as tinkling brass. Her eyes stare past them into the void. No literature or art, no science, neither scales nor sandglass can weigh or measure the meaning of life, of the sea before her or of the firmament above her. The great adventure of the Renaissance, the glow, seriousness, and boldness of humanistic and scientific research, once encountered in its finiteness, must end in despair. The bat, the herald of darkness, appears on the horizon. The hopelessness of scepticism pervades the scene. Dürer in distressed perplexity had long ago concluded: "No one knows that save God alone."⁸ But there is the child, and a sleeping animal, expressive of serenity, imperturbable trust, utter surrender to Him who solves the query of every quest. Is not Dürer's answer that of Rainer Maria Rilke: "All who seek Thee would put Thee to the proof . . . I would comprehend Thee as the earth comprehends Thee."⁹ Must not the seeker after truth become as the lily of the field, the ripening fruit, the sleeping dog — even as the little child in this engraving? "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child . . ."¹⁰

By contrast the third of these originals, *St. Hieronymus im Gehäus*, St. Jerome in his Study, 1514, depicts the saint in serene contemplation of Holy Scriptures; it portrays the bliss of the humanist's devotion to divine learning. This philologist among the Church Fathers, the translator of the Bible, is alone in his study. Here he wants to be. At home with Cicero, yet steeped in the words of Christ, the scholar's joy dispenses peace to all corners of the room. Sleeping beasts repose peacefully and harmlessly in the

foreground. Even the skull on the window seat and the suspended gourd, symbolic of transitoriness, somehow share in the pervasive felicity. A halo of light gathers over the saint's head, sanctifies the silence and sheds enlightenment and solution. Was Isaiah XI in Dürer's mind: "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord"; "the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."¹¹

Neither devil, demon, nor melancholy nears this scholarly saint, who by knowledge alone does not find what he seeks; but by love and by faith he possesses that, which without love were found in vain. His faith is the knowledge that neither doubt nor brooding nor sorrow nor heaven-storming impetuosity ever holds the crocus back. His love forbids that he be a recluse. With the pilgrim hat and sandals near, he is ever ready for active participation in the Christian duties of life.

PERSONALITY IN PORTRAITURE

Dürer shared the temper of the Renaissance and the Reformation in that he saw man in his freedom, alone and responsible, compelled to ethical decisions. Out of this independence modern personality evolved and with it came the demand for portraiture in art. Dürer is one of the few great portrait painters of all time. Beginning with a portrait sketch of himself at thirteen, he continued his autobiography in six self-portraits. A pen-and-ink drawing at nineteen shows him in a mood of dreamy reverie. But as his art developed, the universal of the classical type influenced him. He looked for the general rule, the objective constant; he purged from the individual all that which in its very nature endures but for the moment, the transitory, the relative, all that which belongs only to the particular personality, all that is incidental to the specific instant. Classical breadth and universality sought out the permanent, subtle essence, the pure thought and idea, that which is the compass and inclusiveness of humanity. In the most famous of his self-portraits, painted in 1500, the pure ideal of the characteristics typical of mankind was united with the individual in a Christlike face. Thus would he like to be, thus would the inner Invisible and Perfect One, He who is without blemish, be brought to the surface, if complete

fulfillment were his. Here that which is distinctive in the individual ministers to that irremovable and abiding principle, rational and yet mysterious, which never lifts from human life. For it is only by giving himself to and for others that man grows; only by losing himself in the Spirit of Holiness does he find himself.

Dürer's master portraits include the much beloved *Old Man of Antwerp*, in whom a concentrated light shines forth as in one who walks by the Spirit. The gentleness of the individual, the strength of human nobility speak in the portraits of Hieronymus Holzschuher and Jakob Muffel. The copperplate engravings of men of the Reformation, men of conviction, Frederick the Wise, Pirkheimer, Melancthon, bear the stamp of individualism; there is in them a mixture of being in the world, and of the world, self-assurance and regard for others. But the eyes, in their aloneness and inwardness are directed away from the beholder. The world of the seen and the world of the unseen dwells in them in serene harmony.

STILL LIFE

Dürer was a master in sketching still life. The charcoal drawing of his mother, concentrated and cogent, compressed and revealed in a few frugal lines the portrait of a whole life. The plain features bespeak a love that transfigures the face with beauty. She becomes everyone's mother. The furrowed brow tells less perhaps of a wearied and arduous life than of a spirit long troubled: the protruding eyes, wide open, alert, and keen sighted, press into time past and future. She is alone with herself in inward knowing, but not free of the struggle whose issue is freedom. "She fears death very much," her son wrote, "but she says she does not fear to appear before God."¹²

Dürer's art exhibits the influence of Neo-Platonic mysticism even as it is evident in the contemporary painter Altdorfer, and in Luther, Paracelsus, and Sebastian Franck. Thus Dürer's altar painting *Allerheiligen*, All Saints, 1511, presents the Holy Trinity in the upper center of the canvas surrounded by a circle of saints. Below, the dignitaries of the Empire and the Church together with the Emperor and Pope worship in sumptuous robes. The earth is a hilly heath, there are waters between rolling banks, and a few

scattered trees. Dürer himself stands to the right below, near an altar-like boulder. This contrasts with the conception of the Italian painter Raphael, who placed the high altar with the monstrance on earth as the visible center of the authority of the Church. Dürer's quiet landscape remains untouched by the earthly activity of the Church. His landscape is transfigured by the act of adoration, by the vision of the Triune God. A roseate dawn embraces the worshipers, Emperor, Pope, prophets, saints, apostles, angels, merging all, heaven and earth. This solemn, joyous splendor of color, this gorgeousness of materials in the robes, is a piece of earth, enveloped in mystical clouds. And God thrones in illimitable space.

The union of the Late Gothic, this aspiration of the soul toward God, toward the infinite and the eternal, and the classical, the will to limited form and restraint characterizes Dürer's art. It always portrays the inner life expanding into the All. It endows nature with a soul, proclaims the presence of God, within and without, in man and outside him. It is clearly expressed in the detailed and fine lines, the love and care that create his many kinds of animals, it is present in herbs and blades of grass, and in *Das grosse Rasenstück*, the Large Grass Plot, 1503. The young Goethe in his *Werther* puts this felt piety in nature into words: "When I lie in the high grass along the rippling brook, and a thousand manifold blades of grass assume significance near the earth; when I feel the teeming diminutive world amid the herbs, the countless, unfathomed figures of the little mites, and I feel the midges nearer my heart, and feel the presence of the Almighty, who created us after His image, the wafted fragrance of the All-Loving One, who sustains us and cares for us in eternal delight . . . and the world round about me and the heavens rest entirely in my soul . . . then I often long and think: if only I could express that, if I could breathe upon the paper that which lives so fully, so warmly in me, that it might reflect my soul, as my soul is the reflection of the eternal God."¹³ Like Goethe in a later age Dürer beheld and felt God present in the sod and tree and landscape, in nature, in the universe. God sings and soars and breathes in His creation, in pan-en-theistic presence.

THE FOUR APOSTLES — DÜRER'S LAST MESSAGE

But all the exaltation, reverence, adoration, and awe, all humility, tenderness, and love that Dürer's art represents are epitomized in clarity, color, harmony of composition, and beauty of line in his greatest work, *Die vier Apostel*, 1526. The Four Apostles tower on two panels. The full length figures of St. Paul and St. John dominate the foreground to the right and to the left. St. Mark and St. Peter, though full length also, are shown as half figures in the background, heads and faces in complete view. All are life-size, but they appear elongated not only by the long folds of their robes, but also by that jewel-like, liquid color with which the whole painting is instinct, suffusing face and hands, the very garments with translucence. When one first looks upon the chiselled clarity of line and contour, one is almost persuaded that this painting is sculpture.

The frugal distribution of light and shade accentuates that these men are heroes of the spirit. Their eyes have been opened and they have found the truth. Inner freedom, inner peace is theirs. The firm, monumental figure of St. Paul, holding the Word and the double-edged sword stands in the foreground; Paul, the man of battle, still a-tremble with the vision of God, the eye flaming with passion and light. What intensity of thought, what revelation of things that are hidden does his arched brow carry! Here, clad in a long, greenish-white cloak, is indeed the theologian, the Apostle to the Gentiles. Nothing can dissuade his sacrificial dedication nor his willingness to suffer for Him so miraculously revealed. His trust is in the Book; his staff is a mighty sword: a Christian stands and fights in this world with the weapons of the Spirit. "Put on the whole armor of God . . . for our wrestling is . . . against the powers . . . of darkness. . . . Stand therefore, having shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace."¹⁴ Fortified by truth, eloquent with inner volcanic fire, he steadfastly affirms: "I can do all things through Christ . . ."¹⁵

Behind and to the side of St. Paul appears the half figure of St. Mark, the evangelist with the scroll, lips parted, eyes held by the packed sequence of the healing ministry of Christ, of miracle

upon miracle, the Passion, Death, Resurrection he so succinctly reports. He has seen and heard that "with God all things are possible,"¹⁶ — and "with him that believeth."¹⁷ Somewhat in the background, at the side of St. John's supple slenderness on the other panel, Dürer portrayed the half figure of rugged Peter, keeper of the key. This man of fiery and receptive heart, impulsive, enthusiastic, tempestuous, here wears an expression of quiet joy, of surrendered trust and love. He whose faith had once walked on the water, whose fear had been rebuked: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"¹⁸ he who once had asked, "Lord, whither shall we go?"¹⁹ here finds answer in the book St. John holds: "Thou hast words of eternal truth!"

And then the tall figure of St. John. This sensitive scholar and apostle of love is reading in the Book he holds before him — the German translation of the beginning of his Gospel. His deep red cloak lined with yellow is worn over a long, green tunic. Simplicity and majesty are draped in these folds; the consummate extract of spirituality pauses for an exquisite moment in this idealist. Here is he, whose nature is flame, illumed and luminous, radiating the truth that makes free: "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."²⁰

Each of these men in his own way has wrung an answer from the Eternal, and each, the delicate and zealous idealist John, the assured and loyal Peter, the staunch and inspired prophet Paul, the enraptured epicist Mark, each, endowed with more than "a spark of the divine fire," has come to a conclusion, has found peace that passes understanding in Christ, the Lord. Each has lain prostrate before life's enigma, each has wrestled with God through the night, each has seen and heard, each now stands in the dawn of decision and light.

All this is concentrated not alone in the remarkable heads, whose spirit and power words can neither define nor express; it lies too in the long folds of the robes, in their simple, classical grace, in the flash and sheen of the color, in the magnificent stature of Paul and John. The quintessence of Dürer's art, "the glowing," "the strong," compounded with beauty of line and color, produced in *The Four Apostles* a painting which beggars description. No

words, no reproduction can convey the purity and richness of color, the delicacy, sensitivity, and harmony in perception and expression, nor the power and subtlety of the original: this presence of the essence of the Holy of Holies, this whisper from the void, "Take off thy shoes, for the ground thou standest on is holy ground."²¹ Paul and Mark, John and Peter in their grandeur and greatness, the last gift and farewell to the world of the "manly one," Dürer — supreme representative of the German Renaissance in art and eloquent interpreter of the Reformation in color and line.

MATTHIAS GRÜNEWALD — THE MYSTIC

Whereas in detail and delicacy, much of Dürer's work betrayed its lineage from the art of the goldsmith, the monumental work of Mathis Gothardt Neithardt, better known as Matthias Grünewald, 1483?-1529?, bears the stamp of ecclesiastical art. Dürer subscribed to classical restraint and for the sake of the eternally valid in art subjected himself to strict discipline and self-denial. Tireless in his search for aesthetic laws, he was driven toward universal concepts, toward discovery of the classical type in the individual. Grünewald, however, was indifferent to the Renaissance. Beauty in the sense of the Renaissance, charm in the sense of the Late Gothic, "beauty" or "correctness" as Dürer understood them, were to him not independent values. To seek to portray beautifully proportioned bodies for the sake of portrayal was inconceivable to him. For the external forms had meaning to him only in so far as they symbolized an indwelling world. The appearance of things is a great continuum for this realist in the particular, but idealist in respect to the whole. This total world of his continues beyond realism, and his fantasy leaps beyond the boundaries of the apparent to the surmised.

The Isenheim Altar

It is likely Grünewald was born in the Main Valley. His patron was the Cardinal (Elector) Albrecht von Brandenburg at Mainz. The *Isenheim Altar* in the Museum in Colmar was painted for the Monastery in Isenheim, probably not later than 1515. When the wings of the reredos are closed, one stands before the *Crucifixion*,

severe, unsparing in its realism. By contrast the wings opened disclose the joy of *The Annunciation* on the left, *The Birth of Christ* in the center, *The Resurrection* on the right.

The Crucifixion is exceptional in its conception and execution. Horrible is the death that is the wages of man's sin. So extraordinary is the weight of man's iniquity, that the body of "Him Crucified" must be of Herculean proportions. Yet this physical strength hangs on the cross, slain by the burden it bore, by the agony it endured. It must come to this, that the flesh die, die in its gray-green dissolution, hideous as the world's sin here brought to its death. The swollen head has fallen to the chest, the blood-stained wounds and lacerations are turning violet and green by the corruption already set in; the broken ends of the flogging rods still protrude, the feet are shapeless clumps of flesh, the fingers of the hands nailed to the cross are spread open convulsively. Truly, death here hangs triumphant, death, the curse of sin.

The other figures are smaller; to the left the Apostle John, supporting Mary, who sinks backward as if her body would break in the paroxysm of grief; her bluish-white cloak and hood contrast with his red robe. Mary Magdalene in yellow-rose is kneeling at the foot of the cross, her arms are extended toward the Master, the folds of her cloak converge in the despair centered in the spastic, wide-spread fingers of her enlaced hands. John the Baptist, the last Prophet of the Old Testament, stands in carmine desert garb to the right of this scene of horror, at his feet the lamb, the cross, the cup. Firm, unshaken, he points to the one on the cross: "He must increase, but I must decrease."²² Here John the Baptist, sent to prepare the way, confirms the visible pledge that that which had been decreed since the fall of man has come to pass. The inexorable Law of the Lord God is being fulfilled in a love greater than all fear and fearfulness of death!

This dramatic portrayal of the fulfillment of prophecy and of divine decree is set upon a faraway, hilly wasteland, upon which a blue-black night has descended. The windows of heaven open grudgingly on a distant, low-lying horizon to permit a golden light to creep up almost to the foreground. Against the darkness and the feeble light the figures stand out in pale, ghostlike clarity, the contours sharpened in ascetic relief. The light, the darkness

are colors — transfiguring, sparkling, agonizing. However unlovely the sight of corruption, Grünewald steeps the whole in color infused with sublimity. Whatever the horror of his Crucifixion, there is beyond this sense of death a prophetic, vivifying glow of heavenly love.

Grünewald was keenly aware of suffering. He was sensitive to the agony of soul begotten of the soul's indwelling in the body. This romanticist was convinced that where there is a human body, there is suffering of soul, and conversely, where there is suffering, there is man. Grünewald's translation of the oracular utterance "Ecce Homo!"²³ is none other than "This is the way of the Son of Man!"²⁴ Man and suffering can not be dissociated, neither can one be portrayed without the other. For suffering, according to Grünewald, issues precisely from the conflict of finite matter with infinite spirit. And it is this cosmic and metaphysical purpose of suffering, the death of matter, of the temporal and finite, that he portrays in the Christ dead on the cross. In all the world of painting nothing can compare with the fearfulness and magnificence of this death — this mute mystery cloaked in black night, in the silence of a sepulchral, yet golden light.

If the flesh die, in other words, if iniquity perish, the light of morning greets the spirit. When the wings of the reredos open, four panels of jubilant color reveal and proclaim the festival of triumphant love, the need and meaning of the *Crucifixion*. To the far left *The Annunciation* declares that Logos, the Angel of Jehovah of the Old Testament, that formless emanation which is the will and spirit of God, which in its very nature is not made nor can it be fashioned, is nonetheless seeking form in the Incarnation. In the light admitted through stained-glass windows, Mary is kneeling before draperies thrust aside from a darkened foreground. The dove, borne by a mystic haze, symbol of the Holy Spirit, approaches her: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee!"²⁵ On the left center panel Mary kneels in prayer; a small temple, reminiscent of the wood-carved altars of the Late Gothic, richly ornamented, is filled with heavenly music, for a chorus of angels in scintillating color proclaims ecstatic joy, publishing abroad that "the Holy Thing which shall be born . . . shall be called the Son of God."²⁵

The other half of the center shows *The Birth of Christ*. "The Word was made flesh"²⁶ in such splendor of light that heaven and earth are filled with it. Logos, the Word, gives meaning to life, that is, redeems life from meaninglessness. The Lord God on High in all His majesty, the adoring angels, pendulating in clouds of a radiance that is even "the Light of the world,"²⁷ rejoice with the Mother and Child. An expansive landscape with shepherds herding their flocks on a precipitous mountainside provides the background. Mary is sitting in a garden. The garden gate behind her is closed. The *hortus conclusus*, the garden enclosed, typifies the Virgin Immaculate. The miracle of heavenly love brings to earth the light of life. God, once separate and distant, overleaps all eternity and manifests Himself in "His only-begotten Son." The natural and super-natural become one in the buoyant transport of this reconciliation.

If sixteenth century realism had almost forgotten the transcendental mystery of this Birth, Grünewald's empyreal magnificence pronounces this an event altogether outside the sphere of natural happening. Yet Mary is a human mother. More than that, there are the jug, cradle, tub, unmistakable witness that this child is truly man. With the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven descending to earth, nature exults in a human experience. In the indescribable play of colors, the celestial effulgence melts into the blue mist of the full-moon night. This Birth declares the new heaven and the new earth in the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of man through "His Son," the "one Mediator," "the man Christ Jesus."

And lastly, on the panel to the right, *The Resurrection*. He who, desiring form, was made in the likeness of man, and put to death in the flesh, is quickened by the Spirit. The German artist through an extraordinary technique imparts authenticity to the miracle of the Resurrection. The hand of Grünewald captures the luminescent, ethereal phenomenon of light and carries it to his canvas. In this deep-blue night all light issues from the nimbus, that filtered radiance of the Godhead encircling the Risen One. He has rent asunder the tomb, the body that lay dead within has been transfigured, and is now risen over all that is held in bondage to death and hell. The destroyed temple of the body is raised again in divine majesty. Poised, soaring, it is no longer subject to natural

law. Only the shroud, still clinging loosely to the loins and shoulder, trails to the earth and rests on the tomb. Clearly, "death has lost its sting and hell its victory."²⁸ He who is the Spirit of Holiness and Love, is ascending far above all heavens. The Roman guards no longer sleep. The miracle they have seen has been as a bolt of lightning out of clear skies. For the body that was flesh has in substance become spirit, is a nebular translucence; only the eyes and the wounds in the outstretched hands are dark spots, focalizing the mystery and meaning of the work of Redemption. The Son of God has made Himself a sacrifice according to the will of the Father that the Holy Spirit of Love "may fill all in all."²⁹ Now "is the Son of Man glorified."³⁰

The *Isenheim Altar* is one of the very great works of art. Grünewald, tying to the Late Gothic and to the German art of the fourteenth century, strides beyond the Renaissance, and becomes the forerunner of Rembrandt. He employs light not to model the body as does Leonardo, but to remove the solidity, to dissolve the weight, so that only the outline remains. His vast intelligence, his avid response to sense impressions release him to the dizzy heights of an ecstasy, extravagant almost, that creates an ideality gleaned from the hidden beauty of nature. To this end he uses color. Color gives beauty, and blending colors imparts mobility. He fuses and contrasts the glistening mystery of the aureole, the golden skin of the body, the cardinal cloak, the blinding splendor of white linen against a starlit night, and reflects all these on the armor of the guard. He makes *The Resurrection* a final ovation to the sublimity of rapturous color and mystical light.

The work that is the redemption of man, wrought by the Father through His Son in the Holy Spirit of Love, and thereby the reconciliation of heaven and earth, proclaimed to all ends and endless spaces of the universe, is the answer, the solution Matthias Grünewald, the German, gave to his age.

HANS HOLBEIN — CLASSICAL RESTRAINT

The Swabian race, to whom a love of gentle and restrained beauty is native, produced such painters as Konrad Witz, Stefan Lochner, Martin Schongauer, Hans Baldung Grien. But the greatest among them was Hans Holbein, the Younger, 1491-1543. Hol-

bein was born and reared in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the free city of Augsburg, famed for its wealthy bankers and traders with the Orient, and its commerce with Venice. In Augsburg the Fugger family built the first example of Renaissance architecture in Germany, the St. Anne Chapel, 1509-1518. Holbein went to Italy, was at home in Basel. Erasmus recommended him to Sir Thomas More, then still in favor with Henry VIII. Sir Thomas warned that this remarkable artist might be disappointed in England, but Holbein remained in London for two years. He returned to Basel, but 1532 found him in London again and a few years later he was made the court painter by Henry VIII. At the height of his achievement, the plague carried him off.

Holbein's Renaissance classical temperament gives no indication of a yearning for the illimitable as does Dürer's religious nature; nor did he share in the mystic rapture of a Grünewald; his work exhibits neither ardor, struggle, nor even poetic fancy. Any enthusiasm Holbein may have had was directed to the execution of the painting rather than to its content. A superior intelligence and cool acumen in observation complemented an alert sense of outward things. Whatever his material and within whatever bounds he chose it, his subject is clear, readily defined in structure, outline, and order. In contrast to Dürer's lifelong search and development, Holbein found the technique conformable to his genius fairly early and adhered to it.

In the history of art there are seven or eight portrait painters of first magnitude: the German Dürer, 1471-1528, and Holbein, 1497-1543; the Italian Titian, 1477-1576, and Raphael, 1483-1520; the Spanish Velasquez, 1599-1660; the Flemish Rubens, 1577-1640; the Dutch Van Dyck, 1599-1641, and Rembrandt, 1606-1669.

Among these Holbein achieved the purest objectivity. He scrutinized the physical features of his model, made himself possessor of the most fruitful moment as it passed; and while he held this choice moment, he culled particular details of the face and portrayed them as though they possessed a symmetry which in their corresponding reality they did not have. A sovereign calm guided his sense of fitness as he felicitously linked the figure to the abstraction that is life. He dedicated his meticulous technique to the purpose of impregnating the exterior accidents of form and matter

with the presentable aspects of inner thinking and feeling. To this end every stroke of the brush was directed with scrupulous care, each stroke had to be executed with that nicety which his temper and sensibility of beauty imposed. He catered to the predilection of his age for luxury and fineness of texture, color, and workmanship; every minutest and most intricate design was studied and reproduced with ingenious precision. His color combinations are of select simplicity; the technique alone, decorative, gives exquisite pleasure.

Holbein portrayed individuals representative of the sixteenth century, typical of their race and rank. His own inclination to frugality, compactness, and reserve made him the apt painter of those whose habitual self-containment was a manner of life: English and Continental aristocracy, German burghers of varied rank and degree of achievement, and three men of learning: the meditative, retiring astronomer royal to Henry VIII, *Nicolaus Kratzer*; *Bonifazius Amerbach*, the gentle, humane humanist, with whom Erasmus found no fault except his too great modesty; and the primate of European enlightenment, *Erasmus of Rotterdam*. In this last portrait a colorless skin, hair turning gray, tightly closed lips, a dark costume in which elegant black predominates, are the visible form of this scholar who is clearly the repository of gentility, and of a sharp, satirical coldness and subtlety too. The desire for good, for cherished virtue is evident despite the aloofness of the critic, and the assurance of the man of the world.

After Jane Seymour's death a fourth queen had to be chosen for Henry VIII. Political considerations favored the niece of Charles V; this marriage might conciliate the Emperor whose aunt, Catherine of Aragon, Henry had earlier repudiated. Charles refused to countenance the marriage. However, Holbein had already been instructed to paint the likeness of the fifteen-year-old *Christina of Denmark*, widow of Francesco Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan. This full length portrait of a half-child in severe black, in magnificent velvet and silk-damask is a masterpiece in frugal simplicity.

Of first excellence are the verisimilitude, exquisite detail, and color harmony that distinguish such portraits as: the rich merchant *Georg Gisze*; *Sir George Cornwall*, the "man with a pink"; the

powerful diplomat and statesman, *Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk*, uncle of Catholic Catherine Howard, holding the white wand of the Lord Chamberlain in one hand and the golden staff of an Earl-Marshal of England in the other.

Henry VIII's third wife, *Lady Jane Seymour*, whom he married the day after Anne Boleyn's execution, was known as the loveliest of his queens. This queen, mother of Edward VI, died at twenty-eight. It was beside her the king wished to be buried. In the painting the "white queen's" famous complexion is contrasted with the royal splendor of her dress. However perfect in detail and lustrous in color the jewels, however rich the brocades and the design of the material, the tint of the face gives forth even greater radiance.

The famous portrait of the unpredictable *Henry VIII* presents him in sumptuous, jewel-studded attire. His physique appears to be a large bony structure supporting a mass of flaccid flesh; the eyebrows curve malevolently upward, as though in progressive and accented disassociation from the fixed, unyielding look in the small, closely set eyes. A well-formed mouth, astonishingly and disturbingly small, evidences no generosity or benign stirring. One arm set imperiously akimbo completes a portrait of physical appearance which unmistakably indicates a determined, self-willed callousness. Holbein's painting immortalizes Henry VIII as the epitome and bulwark of royal pomp, obstinacy, and unbounded power.

A nicety of execution and appreciation of excellence marks each of these portraits. The countenances portrayed are governed by a seriousness at times prosaic. Even the children are serious, as if all joyousness were disallowed. There seems to be no awareness of relation to those near at hand even in groups, be they children, family, or friends. The personality of each stands in relief, alone. Each individual is an organic compactness of strength. The hands are often laid one over the other, or they are close together as if they would infold the living, thinking, percipient entity that the individual is, as if they must guard that intimate self against escape or inadvertent sharing with another. These men and women are alone with themselves, exteriorly poised because interiorly in equilibrium. The center of gravity has become visible, tangible in the very solid mass they are represented to be, in its phlegma and inertness.

There is about them all an air of self-possession and self-retainment, which prohibits all outer show of emotional promptings and wears a mask impervious to all prying. The precision of the outer form is the confine of an individual, self-assured, self-sufficient; not presumptuous, but of the Renaissance and Reformation, the visible contour of a conscious *Bei-sich-sein* most extraordinary. They are non-communicative; there is no need of communication. They are personalities closed against any unwanted admittance, free in their aloneness. The painting *Noli me tangere*, the Risen Christ warding off Mary Magdalene's approach, emphasizes this phase of sixteenth century individualism. The portrayed individual sits or stands in the broad clarity of a naked sunlight, in the aura of its glacial opacity — the surface so clear, so detailed and revealed, the within shrouded, secure in an almost paralyzing inevitability.

This Renaissance clarity was basic too in the frugal, definite lines that sketch the "Dance of Death" motif in Holbein's woodcuts. The sixteenth century artists, much occupied with thoughts of life and its pleasures, were also much occupied with thoughts of death. They personified it, not in its high distinction and detachment, but in its indiscriminate cutting short of life's eager pursuit. Some isolated event or dramatic moment, which needs no explanation, was employed in woodcut, engraving, or painting to warn of the imminence of death — *memento mori* — and to dignify man by inculcating a kind of decorum that would teach him how to die.

Holbein's forty miniature woodcuts in the booklet *Dance of Death* invite to reflection in the presence of the great mystery, death: live as you would wish to have lived when the last hour comes. It is plain the import is not renunciation of the world in the sense of the "*memento mori*" poetry of the twelfth century. The summons is rather to affirmation of life and to ethical awareness: live in such a way that you shall not have lived in vain. To Death all are alike, neither rank nor age nor beauty confers immunity — the skeleton grins a ghastly smile and scoffs at all imagined security in a loose-jointed, clattering dance. Death walks beside the plowman's horses and drives them on — but let the plowman plow as long as he can as best he can. Death, playing his violin and offering sweet music, comes to the weary one as a friend; he walks as a drummer before the lord and lady; he assails the peddler in the public road. Holbein's calm detachment in conception and con-

struction of that acute moment between two conjectural eternities stands in sober contrast to the grim subject he sketches.

In antiquity a human figure symbolically represented death. The Byzantines saw Thanatos as an old man. This legacy to the Occident was transformed into a mummified corpse and skull. As early as the thirteenth century this concept appeared in France, where the religious stage presented the dance between the living and the dead accompanied by didactic dialogue. These dances had their origin in the belief that the dead leave their graves at night, and dance in the cemeteries as ghosts. Any mortal participating in these dances therewith becomes a victim of Death. Death may at any time choose any living person for such a dance. The "dance of death" depicted in the form of a round dance seems to have appeared in Basel about 1400, earlier therefore than the famous *Danse Macabre* in the Cemetery of the Innocents in Paris, 1424. The oldest known woodcut to use the motif bears the date 1446. It is understandable that the sixteenth century, teeming with life, exuberance, and violence, should need to be reminded: *media vita in morte sumus*. It is not surprising then, that Holbein, reflecting the spirit of this same age, should strip the corpse that signified death of all but its bony framework.

LUKAS CRANACH

Though not as notable as his greater contemporaries, Lukas Cranach the Elder, 1472-1553, established in Wittenberg, was a master in technical skill, pictorial craftsmanship and unpretentious naturalness in his fine early work, woodcuts and paintings. The three crosses in *The Crucifixion*, 1503, form a triangle in which one malefactor hangs at the extreme left, the other, degenerate in body and soul, toward the left in the background, and Christ to the right. Mary and John alone are there. A ghostly solitude pervades Golgotha. Nature, especially the dead tree and the black thundercloud, shares the immense gloom and plainly utters a protest. In this revolt against the occurrence, she arrogates to herself the privilege of speaking for herself, and that means, nature here assumes independence and autonomy.

There is a look of wistful inquiry upon the scattered trees, the birch, the fir with its whitish beard, in the idyllic *Rest on the*

Flight to Egypt, 1504. A spirit of delight has descended upon the scene; nature has invited the holy family to stop here near the mossy spring on the heath. This family, it seems, is in no special sense holy, but just a carpenter with wife and child. They are on an outing in holiday garb and mood, and the outing has spontaneously become a charming fairy-tale party. The enchantingly busy, little guests are bringing gifts, one a bird, another cherries, another a shell of water from the spring; other four are offering a serenade. Man, angel, nature together create and participate in the tender, implicit intimacy, the unconventionality of this happy event.

Here is an early "intime" landscape; here is a sense of space, infinitude of space, of delicate and delicious joy upon tree and heath. The festive mood makes known that tree and heath and sky and moss are but the outer greeting of the Invisible One. Cranach knew how to blend landscape and figure, how to transmit to the landscape that aura of the miraculous requisite to the transfiguration of a holy occurrence. He presents the event in its simple naturalness, and nature hymns her silent Magnificat.

NATURE IN GERMAN ART

The fifteenth century had been conscious of man's environment. The materialism of a Dutch Jan van Eyck, a Roger van der Leyden had portrayed man surrounded by the things of his external circumstances. But this Late Gothic was still lifeless nature, for here parts and pieces of a landscape were objectively set side by side. The feeling for nature exhibited in *Petri Fischzug*, Peter's Draft of Fishes, 1444, and *Christus am Kreuz*, 1447, painted by the Swiss Konrad Witz, was a singular phenomenon far in advance of his time. In general, fifteenth century landscape painting was an accumulation of detail, an awareness of the external world wholly devoid of inner unity.

A sixteenth century Paracelsus beheld God's activity in nature. Luther perceived His presence everywhere. And for the first time in art, German genius endowed nature with an innate self-sufficiency, with subjective impulses, with a capacity for independence. Elevated to a position beside God and man, landscape in the widest sense assumed significance for the soul agitated, com-

forted, inspired, at home in it. Dürer's natural scenery in water color and engraving offers clear instruction in the early contemplative approach to nature. Dürer, the first painter of pure landscape, no longer translated nature figuratively nor as ecclesiastical accoutrement. Inspired by her own moods, nature is so humanized she needs no animate beings to give her significance. Exquisite water colors reflect the astonished joy of discovering nature, of drawing near the unending abundance of remarkable objects she garners; of depicting her physiognomy, her mood. Or, Dürer takes delight in capturing her as a composite whole. Even the simple, quiet landscape has immeasurable meaning: there is mourning in clouds hanging low, light, and joy, and comfort in the open windows of heaven, and beauty and transport effused over the whole.

Pure Landscape

With Dürer the landscapes were a secondary matter. But in the German Alpine lands, artists had become so aware of the fair face of heaven and earth, that nature was made the purpose of their art. The Danubian School, sprung up on the banks of the Danube in Western Bavaria and in Austria the early part of the sixteenth century, fostered an attention to nature so alive that art was made the medium for translation of the artist's silent affection and for the meaning nature conveyed to him. The native meadows and forests were found attractive, fascinating; friendly chats by the wayside with neighbors were much like chance meetings with Joseph, the saints, or Mary out for a stroll. The Bible was now read by everyone, and *men* were presented there, fellow men near and dear. God was now found to be the "Dear Father," who lent an ear to everyday affairs. And so nature too was close, intimate; nature was accepted as participating in life's subtleties and devotions. Indeed, she possessed the faculty of communicating her own heedfulness. There was awareness of the life, the spirit of God animating natural things, and pure landscape was born, come into being for its own sake.

Albrecht Altdorfer, 1480-1538, the most engaging talent of the Danubian School, lived in Regensburg, a city outside the ambit of fifteenth century art development. Uninitiate in the problems

over which Dürer brooded, he solved difficulties with almost child-like ingenuousness; in fact, his untroubled felicity suggests he hardly noted them. Whereas the Middle Ages had delegated art to the service of the Church, Altdorfer, choosing a biblical subject, simply pictured spontaneous joy in a natural event. So indifferent does he seem to his biblical subject, that it appears he was careless, even discreetly heedless, of conveying a specifically sacrosanct message.

This romanticist, three hundred years before the Age of Romanticism, lived in the dream world of poetry. His art no longer placed objects side by side, but was focalized in an idyllic situation, in which figure, space, and nature imbibe of the moment's fullness. And here the landscape is significant, not man. Altdorfer discovered the forest with its witching mystery. *St. George*, doing battle with the dragon in the lower right corner of the painting, might not be detected, were he not riding a white mount; the density of the forest, the interplay of light and shadow in the masses and clumps of foliage is so pervasive and arresting, the glimpse of a mountain lake in the far background so pertinent, that the saint and the dragon can claim no more than auxiliary relevancy.

Soon the landscape alone sufficed him. *Mountain Landscape*, a water color, reproduced the simplicity of native scenery, the Danube's narrow valley below Passau and the foreland of the Eastern Alps, seen in the loveliness of an enchanted moment. The drawing, *Landscape*, 1520-1525, pictures a cluster of trees, ruins, distant mountains, a romantic background for a great larch with its wide, pendulous branches, its strength and loveliness, dreamy, musing. The barely evident figure at its roots is lost in reverie too. This *Landscape* is nature wrapped up in subjective, contemplative mood.

The objective conciseness that characterized Dürer's depiction of nature in his woodcuts or engravings, the linear outline of his cumulous clouds, or the mystic pathos in nature so real to Grünewald, are not found in Altdorfer. He saw the stir and flurry in the skies, the cirrus cloud, its delicacy vanishing into nothing. There is a profusion, a massiveness of exuberant foliage, of rank growth and vitality, lush, unhindered. The earth in its fullness is simply there. Man is not needed. Except by indirection: a road,

a path, a presence, an admittance into creation's mood and temper, an at-homeness in her precincts are adequate. Her very countenance declares her individualism, she stands in time and place, and beyond these she is the exponent of thoughts and visions wholly her own. Altdorfer taps nature's store of color and line, naively confident that here is beauty. Thus German artists set nature free and established the rôle of landscape in art.

THE REFORMATION AND ART

The attitude of the Reformation to art had of necessity to be unlike that of the Roman Church, for in the Reformation the outer world was replaced by an inward world, and what supremely matters in the experience of the Protestant is peace and joyous trust of interior life, which in itself bestows upon the external world an effective sanction. In the prime of the Reformation religion and art interpenetrated, and Luther and Dürer were not chance contemporaries; in art as well as in religion in Germany a transforming spirit was at work to harmonize contrasts, to deepen realization and to emphasize expression.

The Roman Church of the Middle Ages was influenced by Greek philosophy as well as by the aesthetic charm of old Roman pagan rites and Old Testament liturgy. The morning hymn of which Pliny speaks, was echoed in the service of the mass. Old Roman harmonies were formed into Gregorian music. Beautified pagan temples were made Christian sanctuaries. The liturgical spirit of the Roman Church, her monasticism, her system of ritual, all of these are expressive of her outward comeliness, an outward grace of godliness. Here the influence of classical antiquity, eager to see its thought precised in stone or literature or music, is evident; Greek and Latin thinking, perceptual, perspicuous, discovering poetic beauty in sheer clearness of thought and its rendition in distinct and fair form, is reflected in the Roman Church. This external grace in worship is the continuation, the metamorphosis of the classical Greek bent to exhibit thinking and objective contemplation. In its course through the centuries, the Roman Church promoted the cultivation of a splendid ceremony, that is, the objectivization of its religious thinking and feeling in art, side by side with scrupulous and stern spiritual precepts, with intolerance, and aesthetic austerity.

Early Christianity and the German Reformation, however, were alike and distinguished in the fact that religious experience takes place in the inner, unseen soul. Sanctified by the Holy Spirit, the soul is consecrated to priesthood and to the royalty of kingship. Inward harmony endows man with a sense of freedom made manifest in the outward world by a wholesome beauty and profound serenity of soul. Art was not needed for the portrayal of this beauty and this serenity. To be sure, art still turned to religious subjects in the Reformation, but these were now dictated by the subjective artist, no longer by a collectivistic papacy. Holbein's *Madonna with the Burgomaster Meyer's Family*, for instance, was clearly antithetical to the devotion of the Middle Ages; earlier centuries would have thought it sacrilegious presumption to place the Divine Child in the very midst of this burgher family.

GERMAN PROTESTANTISM AND MUSIC AND POETRY

It is significant that while Calvinists in France, Holland, and England drove adornment and beauty out of the temple, German Lutherists did not resort to this practice of iconoclasm. Luther did not desire the destruction of the Roman Catholic sanctuaries and their altars, but desired rather to convert them to a new and higher use. Luther, and with him Protestantism, based the foundation of religious ritual on the New Testament Word: "God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." This worship can dispense with great works of art, paintings, and altars, it needs no visual representation of the Virgin Mary and the saints, no longer deified, but now become humble mortals.

The Protestant church thus offered little encouragement to art. If in Germany as in the rest of Europe art had once been appendant to religion, Luther's translated Bible directed religious fantasy away from pictorial art — to music and poetry. Luther's language is laden with that refined pleasure in words, which is poetry, and with rhythm and rich sound, which is music. The reading of his German Bible was fostered in the Protestant schools. Inevitably the German future after the Reformation belonged in greater measure to poetry and music, these two arts of the intuitive and unseen. However, though the German Reformation was not hostile

to art, it did not need the aesthetic adornment so significant in the Roman Church. The incitement to pious bequests in the form of statues of saints or paintings depicting scenes in the lives of saints was brought to an end by the Reformation when it denied to "good works" any merit in the winning of the soul's salvation. But it should not be forgotten that Protestantism did produce a Rembrandt a hundred years later, to mention only the greatest Protestant painter after the great height attained to by art in Germany in the era of the Reformation.

The Reformation stressed music and singing. Luther introduced the *Choral*, this singular union of religious precept, adoration, praise, and thanksgiving expressed in poetic word and solemn melody. From the *Choral*, the way led to the cantata, the oratorio, and the *Passions*. Even as the Protestant Johann Sebastian Bach combined music with the *Choral* in unparalleled perfection, so its polyphonic harmony influenced German music even to our day.

GERMAN SIXTEENTH CENTURY RECONCILES GOD AND MAN

Did the Renaissance in Germany then provide a substitute for that which was lost through the Reformation? Did it perpetuate for the future that which is understood as "Renaissance" in the fine arts? In the main, in the sense of the Renaissance as a pattern of outward transparency, moderation, plastic exactitude, symmetrical organization, the answer must be in the negative. The German sixteenth century was a Faustian one. That is, its quest was after harmony between God and man, reconciliation between heaven and earth. It did not habitually present man as one who serenely abides in the beautiful moment, or as he appears in the perfected calm of an Apollo, in the surcease from longing and reaching upward, as does the true Renaissance. Whatever the German artist may have received from Italy, whatever his reason may have recognized as the loveliness of Italian classicism, in the last analysis, the perfection, the lucidity, the overt concord, the ostensible tranquility consequent upon consummate fulfillment, was to the Northern genius little more than a beautiful delusion.

Life to the German artist was deeper, more stirring and stirred in the inner unfolding of beauty and energy. He whose heart expanded in genuine religious awe as he pondered the profound

intimations of the twilight, who beheld it endued with the spirit of an inscrutable intention; he who had in hallowed moments of grace apprehended the meaning of true deliverance, and been anointed with that mystic unction which dedicates the soul in grateful and freed assurance, saw man, not as already perfected, but as reaching forth unto perfectness. He who in his heavenward gaze touched God in a blissful instant in that marvelous lyrical intuition which flows from the one and only permanent source of inspiration, must perceive man bound to the earth with its hours and seconds, imploring heaven to grant its eternal timelessness to this blissful moment. The German Dürer, Paracelsus, or Grünewald, who in impassioned immediacy had been lifted into the harmony of a supreme knowing and being which is complete in itself, who had drawn upon the power which through love soothes and fortifies the soul, were fundamentally of a Baroque temper rather than of the Renaissance.

This Baroque temperament denotes that man stands reverently before the supra-rational, before the mystic brightness felt within and reflected without. And thus the Gothic-Baroque springs were welling up in sixteenth century art — the Late Gothic in the early decades and the Baroque toward the end of the century — each an expression of an awesome surmise of the eternal present in the moment, of the infinite encompassing the finite. This Gothic-Baroque quality comprehends man as born into the world of things and yet aspiring to the kingdom of heaven, comprehends man as a creature, as nature transformed in ebb and flow into spirit. Indeed, it may be said that whenever the German surrenders most completely to his aesthetic intuition and prophetic beholding, he becomes Gothic, Baroque, Romantic — different names for essentially the same thing dominant in different eras. It is obvious then, that the Reformation will be the inexhaustible wellspring, from which the German genius of the future will draw more deeply than from the ever-flowing fountain of the Renaissance. Thus, to a Dürer or a Grünewald, art is more than the creation of beautiful form out of the formless, it is more than an attempt to give answer to the confusion of the age in the world of appearance. The *Isenheim Altar*, the *Four Apostles*, and *Christ in Gethsemane* proclaim that man is reborn in God alone, that He is the source of all joy and the only salvation of mankind.

CHAPTER IV

**THE REFORMATION —
MARTIN LUTHER**

PART ONE

MAN'S RELATION

TO

GOD AND MAN

Solution

in the

Realm of Spirit

INADEQUACIES OF INTELLECTUALISM

Humanism, which believes that life's fullness, fulfillment, and happiness are secured through knowledge, research, analysis, through the cultivation of sensitivity to form and love of the beautiful, has since its inception been a strong force in Western civilization. It must be apparent, however, that the humanistic rebirth could hardly effect a reformation of the people, since scholarly pursuits, scientific investigations, and the almost exclusive use of Latin made Humanism an aristocratic movement limited in influence. To be sure, the humanists were critical of the abuses in the Church; they broke away from traditional theology and in their search for truth regarded the Bible the superior source of truth. But derision of religious decadence and satire effective rhetorically could hardly instruct the groping one nor teach him the way he was to go. Sceptical philosophy is a most powerful solvent, but it carries in it no germ of organic life. And what truth there was even in Erasmus' teaching had to assume a far other form before it could become potent in the reinvigoration of human life. In clearer moments he himself felt he was incapable of bringing enlightenment to the mass of ignorance with which he saw himself surrounded. It is likely that the accomplishment of the sixteenth century would have meant little more than an initial step toward the emancipation of reason had not the greater and stronger movement of the Reformation, a complement to Humanism, released a spiritual and inworking freedom in man's transcendental soul.

When Martin Luther appeared, Germany was in the midst of the intellectual agitation sown by Erasmus, Reuchlin, and their followers. The complex aspect of the age into which Luther was born presents man exposed to hazard, famine, predatory incursions, violence, on the one hand; on the other it shows him engaged in intensive and extensive enterprise in all fields. With the growth of the cities the burgher had acquired greater self-reliance and dignity. But a spiritual dearth prevailed, evident in the layman's inner

life troubled by the awareness of the passing of all things and anxious under the burden of guilt in the presence of a stern Judge. A largely decadent hierarchy, whose conscience was exhausted and calloused, could offer little or no comfort. In such a plight much of the robust haleness abounding in this age espoused insensibility to ultimate truths by abandonment to the distractions of comic, grotesque, and sensuous pleasures, or to the luxury of magnificence and splendor.

Humanism might optimistically assume that the ills, "barbarisms," and gropings of the age would be metamorphosed by acquaintance with the culture of antiquity. But the acquisition of that culture lay beyond the reach of the uninstructed, who neither hoped for nor desired initiation into the mysteries and amenities of ancient learning and life. The reform program of Humanism was engrossed in the welfare and refinement of the enlightened few of all lands. Furthermore, the humanists in the main had no certain answer for the restlessness of conscience and the miserableness of life.

Luther's answer, simple, gripping, releasing, was certain to awaken a wide response. To be sure, as with the Prophets and Apostles in whose footsteps he followed, the spiritual purity of his intentions was not fully realized in his age. But the idea of the Christian, free from all fetters, bound in love only, gave positive direction and strong impulsion to a vigorous, naturalistic age, awaiting liberation to either self-destruction or creativeness.

MARTIN LUTHER — EARLY LIFE

Though the Reformation was an inclusive movement, it was in its basic essentials the work of one man, Martin Luther, 1483-1546. His genius, his courage, his faith defied the might of Church and Empire, risked life itself for the sake of a personal, direct relation to God, for the sake of freedom of religious belief and freedom of conscience. The great thinkers of Humanism, an Erasmus or a Sir Thomas More, for instance, were, despite the seriousness and sincerity of their intent, aristocrats of the mind. Luther was to be followed by other great men of action, a Calvin, an Ignatius Loyola.

But the basic decisions of the Reformation were made in the

personal battle "to achieve a merciful God" fought by Martin Luther. They were truths arrived at through personal, inward suffering, prayerful prostrations before and wrestlings with God. And in the faith he won, Luther achieved what in the final analysis the humanists had been striving for. His was the task to fight the battle alone—to the very throne of God Himself, and to a personal faith in His grace. To a grace and a faith which transforms the whole of man.

Martin Luther was born November 11, 1483, in Eisleben in Thuringia, a little town in which he died 63 years later. The family, small, but free, landholders, soon settled in Mansfeld where Luther was sent to school to learn rhetoric, music, and Latin as taught in the monastery schools. The family life was strict and stern, and the recollections of the unbending rigidity at home and his sufferings at the hands of teachers made him tender ever after with children. In 1497 he attended the school of the Brethren of the Common Life in Magdeburg. The piety of these lay Brethren left its imprint on him. He then went to Eisenach where he sang with others before the houses of the well-to-do for any pittance that might help sustain life. Refined, motherly Frau Ursula Cotta "discovered" the talented youth, and invited him often into her patrician and pious home. When ready for further study, he enrolled in the University at Erfurt, where he was a student from 1501 to 1505.

Life and study were strictly regulated according to the prevailing academic curriculum. Luther could not have grappled so successfully with the weakness of medieval Catholicism in the Roman Church, had he not been a master of its methods. He received formal and thorough training in logic, rhetoric, physics, natural science, and Greek philosophy. He knew the Church Fathers. He was perfectly at home in the scholastic art of reasoning by syllogism. The disputations he was compelled to engage in as a part of his studies sharpened his dialectical faculties. Because he excelled in debate he was called "the philosopher."

Moreover, since the University at Erfurt favored the learned endeavors of Humanism, he came to know classical antiquity also in its Latin exponents—Cicero, Virgil, and Ovid. His many references and quotations from Latin and Greek poets and philoso-

phers indicate how rich a treasure he garnered in those university days. His friends among the humanists at the University called him "*philosophus eruditus*."

In February, 1505, the University of Erfurt conferred upon Luther the degree of Master of Arts. He then began the study of jurisprudence. In the summer a thunderstorm overtook him on a highway a few hours' walk from Erfurt. Lightning struck a tree so near that he was hurled several yards. Thankful that his life was spared, he made a vow to St. Anne to become a monk. It is not known whether this step had been previously contemplated. Doubtlessly, however, he had already begun the search for release from the *tentatio tristitiae*, the anxiety for his soul's salvation, of which he later wrote so much. At twenty-two he entered the Augustinian Monastery in Erfurt. Here he stood fast before some of the most profound trials of his inner life, encounters with God, the Almighty, the Holy One.

He became acquainted with the "modern" theology of the English Franciscan, William of Occam, 1270-1347, pupil of Duns Scotus. Occam, the "invincible doctor," believed that nothing can be discovered by reason, that everything must rest upon faith. Occamism thus prepared the way for the overthrow of Scholasticism by arguing that little of importance to man can be learned by scholastic methods. Throughout his life Luther adhered to the similar tenet that human reason is incapable of wholly comprehending the truths of God's revelation. Study of the more liberal sixteenth century Occamists also afforded him a clear understanding of Aristotelian philosophy.

However, Luther asked many questions which Occamism did not answer. Occamism, or Nominalism, emphasized that since the human mind is limited in its capabilities, theological tenets are beyond its understanding and thus can not be proved; that fact, however, does not affect their truth. On the contrary: that which one can not know one must believe. Luther soon discovered that Occam's dialectic was designed to serve one purpose: to prove the tenets of the Roman Church, though not verifiable on the basis of logic, valid.

Occam maintained that the ecclesiastical statutes had been created upon the original, arbitrary statute of sovereign God. In

the first place God manifests His absolute power in His arbitrariness. Bound to neither law, ethic, nor logic, His absoluteness extends beyond all human comprehension, and beyond all ecclesiastical dogma and sacrament. However, over and above this, He permits Himself to be found in the order of the Church, Word, and sacrament. And He requires that this established order be accepted, believed, and obeyed. He will reward submission to the doctrines of the Church and obedience to His laws.

In his monastery years Luther wrestled with this unknown-known God of Occam. He did not question that it pleased God to save man according to His will and in His own way. But he objected to the scholastic "*facere quod in se est.*" Nominalistic moral-pedagogical emphasis was proof of a superficial analysis and offered no consolation to a soul in distress. Or again: Occam and his disciple Biel demanded full contrition and not attrition as a prerequisite for the efficacy of the sacrament. That is, repentance or sorrow for sin, which fell short of being contrition because it arose from an imperfect motive was called attrition: if for instance detestation of sin sprang from fear of hell, or from the dread of losing heaven, or even from the contemplation of the heinousness of guilt, then the term imperfect contrition or attrition was applied. Over against this interpretation stood the traditional conception that full contrition accompanied by the active love of God wipes out sin. In that case, Luther asked, were sacrament and mass really necessary? Luther knew he could not call forth the spiritual disposition necessary for the effectiveness of the sacrament as demanded by the scholastic doctrine. For out of his own strength he could not overcome the innate selfishness which opposes God and which stands as the foundation of life. Very early, then, Luther came to disagree with the views of Scholasticism.

Whatever influence Occam and Nominalism may have exerted upon him, Luther's religious temper was of wholly different stamp. There was nothing of the subtle sophistry or the captious intellectualism in him to foster a doctrinaire tendency whose delight in dialectics culminated in absurdity. Luther's religious genius had this in common with the prophet: he was original in his profundity and singular in his discernment. And therefore it was

not a question of a theological problem nor of logic, but it was rather the search for actuality and reality, the search for the real, genuine experience, the pressing forward to the "actual," the "real," the "true," which alone could vouchsafe peace of mind.

He was ordained a priest in 1507. In 1510 Staupitz, the prior of the convent, sent him on a pilgrimage to Rome. He fell on his knees in devotion and thanksgiving when he saw the "Eternal City" from afar: "Blessed Rome, sanctified with the blood of martyrs!" But the spiritual laxity apparent in high ecclesiastical places shocked him. Rome with its gilded chariots and gorgeous rituals and pagan splendor pressed upon his troubled soul with sorrow: "Let all who would lead a holy life depart from Rome." Disturbed, filled with anxiety he returned to Saxony. He completed his work for the theological doctorate. In 1512 the Elector called him to the University of Wittenberg to take over the professorship of philosophy vacated by his beloved General Vicar of the Augustinian Order, Johann von Staupitz. Though Wittenberg was a small town lying on the outskirts of civilization, Luther remained there for the rest of his life. Here again, as in the monastery, he faced the question of his relation to God and God's relation to him — the question of his very existence.

The Reformation did not issue from a temper prodded primarily by the influence of the Renaissance, though to be sure it was inspired by the same energy of resuscitated life active in the contemporary Renaissance. The Reformation sprang from a need to rebirth in God. Renaissance and Humanism, on the other hand, responded to the urgent requirement of rebirth into this world. In its immediacy, Luther's renascence was the direct result of spiritual struggles which unceasingly beset him. He wrestled with an incomprehensible God until he felt himself directly touched, seized, and illumined, and thence he pressed forward toward ultimate truth, the driving force of the Reformation.

Luther called his age "Epicurean,"¹ centered in man rather than in God, anthropocentric rather than theocentric. Three influential forces of the sixteenth century, the Old Testament emphasis on the Law, Greek philosophy, and Roman Law, carry a predilection intrinsically and unmistakably anthropocentric; they issue from a rational inquiry into life and its purpose, from the human

will to power and happiness. Luther maintained, that, if the Gospel was to loom large and live freed and free, this emphasis must shift. Man must realize that the source of his strength is not initially man; that it is not man who may lay claim to God, but that Christianity is the revelation of God's just claim to man, the revelation of God's transforming love for man, and that precisely here is the essence of its message of salvation. Luther was strongly persuaded, that unless Christianity be centered in God, it must fail.

In its ultimate goal the Reformation, as envisaged by Luther, was not a battle for human rights, either in state or Church, but for God's rightful claim to man's soul, to man's whole being, to man's conscience; he would endow man with strength to overcome all that which must destroy God's kingdom here and beyond. Values and goals must be established in this indwelling kingdom; here all outer relations must be determined and they must arise out of such purity that the world shall be made a deed of the Holy Spirit in all its parts. Here Christian freedom is grounded, here, through grace, man may become more than man, through faith in the Absolute he is made creative, is made His instrument, and is called to active participation in effecting His will in the earth.

THE CHURCH OF ROME AND PENITENCE

The Roman Church had through the centuries strengthened its holy exaltation and its authority in the minds of laity and clergy by the assertion that its order and its commands were given it directly by God. The ordinary man of the sixteenth century thought of religion as the way to life after death. And the key to heaven was by divine ordination given into the hands of the clergy. The Christian's assurance of salvation required that he confess his sins regularly to the priest, be granted absolution, receive the sacraments, and go to mass. There were prescribed penances for sins committed. If his conscience still troubled him, he might increase his gifts and alms, he might go on a pilgrimage, to a shrine or sacred well, to the Holy City Rome, or to some wonder-working image. For a due consideration, it was not too hard a matter to put his mind at ease.

The prime doctrine of the theology of the Church was the redemption of man through the crucified Son of God. By inference it appeared however that the Church possessed the sole right to dispense grace, that to it belonged the supreme power of mediation between God and man. In the end the faithful accepted that approach to God was possible only through the intercession of the Church. Confusion prevailed as to the prerogative of a conscience bound to God and a conscience bound to the theocratic dogma of the Church.

Superlative confusion reigned, moreover, in regard to the import of penitence as a means of grace. By the sixteenth century deliverance from the dominating power of sin required that the sinner be truly penitent and confess his transgressions. The doctrine of divine grace now approximated: that since nothing more than that which sinful man could do was asked of him, Christ had abolished his guilt; that man, however, must make amends for the penalty incurred and make himself worthy of the divine regard through good works. The more zealously this was done the greater the hope of eternal life. The "treasure of merits," the accumulated merits of Christ and the saints treasured up, offered to the faithful a supply upon which he might draw either through good works he himself performed, or through the purchase of a letter of Indulgence. The papal Indulgence had by this time become a juridical absolution. It granted remission of punishment for temporal sins upon the voluntary assumption of a penance: giving alms, going on a pilgrimage in order to discharge some vow or religious obligation, or to obtain some spiritual benefit, fasting, entering an order, or the personal practice of good works. In the early centuries this body of goods works approved by the Church might represent gratitude to God, and the good deed as such was not invested with meritoriousness.

What brought about the system of Indulgences? The Church of Rome, to which alone the institution of Indulgences is peculiar, defines an Indulgence as a partial or total remission of the temporal punishment which remains due to sin after its guilt has been taken away by priestly absolution. Remission is granted by the authority of the Church, whose right it is to state what conditions are to be imposed upon the penitents. Indulgences avail before God in this world as well as in the next.

In Church history the first intimation of Indulgences is found in the discipline exacted by the early Church with respect to the reconciliation of persons who for some reason were excluded from its communion. In order to test the sincerity of the penitent, the Church imposed a term of probation and the performance of works of penitence, such as fasting, alms giving, and prayer in humble posture before the gates of the church. The bishop might shorten the time of probation or lighten the burden of the works of penitence in recognition of the favorable disposition of the person seeking readmission to communicant privileges. The introduction of outer works of penance as well as their relaxations were a matter of church discipline or policy. A letter written in the third century by the clergy of Rome to Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, expressed doubt as to God's approval of the judgments of the Church.

Indulgences as such appeared for the first time in the eleventh century. Pope Urban II induced Christian knights and warriors to undertake the First Crusade, promising "Indulgence" for their sins, should they die penitent. In conjunction with the proclamation of the first holy year to be solemnized, the jubilee of 1300, Pope Boniface VIII published Indulgences. Some of the early decrees exhibit little awareness of the theological distinction between sin and penalty, and they often granted remission of temporal punishment as forgiveness of sin or guilt.

The discipline of public reconciliation gradually gave way to private administration of the so-called sacrament of penance. By means of sacramental absolution the guilt of sin was taken away and the penitent was restored to a state of grace. To achieve this absolution, confession had to be made to an approved priest. He forgave the sins and imposed the penance. This penance was exacted as a satisfaction for the disorder caused by sin and as a sign of the penitent's readiness to make amends to God, so far as was in him, for his offense. In most cases however a debt remained, and this had to be paid in this life or in the next. The penitent, duly reconciled to God by priestly absolution, could not after death enter immediately into heaven, but had to compensate in purgatory for whatever was wanting in his satisfactions. Only after he had made up the equivalent of his debt could he enter into the fullness of God's presence. Indulgences might

be used as a substitute for the payment of the remaining debt, and thus they were a convenient device to shorten, in rare cases even to cancel, the term of retention in purgatory. The Holy See had the power of administering the treasury of "unused" merits accumulated by Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the saints, and of granting credit to those who qualified, who had done the prescribed works or recited the assigned prayers.

Abuses crept in very early. The exchange of the dispensation granted by the Indulgences for a contribution of money to some pious cause soon deteriorated into an open sale. By the sixteenth century Christians raised their voices in protest against an operation designed to fill the Roman coffers under the pretense of emptying purgatory. The cynicism of the itinerant preachers and hawkers of Indulgences is evident in the jingle heard widely in Germany:

"As soon as the gold in the casket resounds,
The rescued soul to heaven bounds."²

Indulgences, as in effect in the sixteenth century, remitted the punishment for sin imposed by the Church, or rather, they converted this punishment into a money-penalty. The penalty was considered a discipline, retribution, and was exacted as an expression of the sinner's penitence. The penalty, the outward expression, was in fact the discipline or act of reparation or austerity imposed by the priest after sacramental confession, and it formed an integral part of the sacrament of penance. The sacrament of penance consisted of contrition, confession, and satisfaction or penance on the part of the penitent, and of absolution on the part of the confessor. And the buying of Indulgences afforded to the penitent one form of proving his penitence.

Indulgences were in the sixteenth century not assumed to grant forgiveness of sin. Remorse does that. Indulgences simply transformed the disciplinary chastisement fixed by the Church. It was possible to earn Indulgences by means of definite gifts or acts, such as prayer, participation in a particular churchly exercise, or by the offer of a sacrifice proceeding from a pious heart, as the beautification, enlargement, or founding of a church or other new buildings dedicated to the interests of the Papal See.

Thus, in order to obtain money for the construction of St. Peter's in Rome, several important Indulgences were promulgated. No favor could procure them. No compulsion attached to them. Every member of the Church was free to unburden his conscience from the weight of the imposed penalty for his transgression by undertaking a pilgrimage, or by prayer, fasting, and the like; or he might settle his account by way of a monetary penance. Viewed from a secular point of view, however, the sale of Indulgences was but a form of ecclesiastical taxes, collected actually from the most penitent and conscientious of believers.

The whole procedure presupposed discriminatory ability, an endowment none too frequently found. The man of the Middle Ages was to distinguish between the two demands made: the one, remorse, a Christian-religious requirement; the other, an outward exercise as a sign of repentance, a juridical church-disciplinary correction. According to Christian doctrine, God desires a contrite heart only. The Church as an organization, however, amplified this essential by exacting the outer performance of some specific act of mortification as an expression of sorrow for and satisfaction of sin. As has been said, Indulgences, a form of satisfaction, could never effect forgiveness of sin; they could merely convert the penalties fixed by the Church. The simple believer, however, instructed and incited by incompetent or ill-qualified clergy and venders of letters of Indulgences, was easily confused as to the religious and the disciplinary aspect involved; he thought he was acquiring certain forgiveness of sin and justification before God by paying the stipulated sum. The conflict of conscience, the decisive question of guilt and atonement, which confronts Rodion Roskolnikov, for instance, in Dostoevski's *Crime and Punishment*, or the question of spiritual murder, which rises before the same author's *Brothers Karamasov*, was degraded to an outward act, which could be disposed of in a more or less simple manner.

Religion had thus by the sixteenth century become in reality detached from daily life. It was the generally accepted notion that divine grace is in fact little more than the visible form of objective piety. Religion had come to be, in the main, worship of the holy wafer, adoration of the Mother Mary and the saints, of relics and images, of the life of Christ — a Christianity con-

fused, complex, contradictory, externalized. The way to salvation taught by the Church might be adequate to the millions who subscribed to it. That it proved inadequate to Luther lay in his sensitive conscience. In the course of his development he became aware of Roman deviations from the will and command and promise of God discovered in Holy Scriptures.

A Dominican friar, Johann Tetzel, appeared on the confines of Saxony to sell Indulgences issued by the Pope. The fee for which they were obtained presumably went to the Holy See, to be used to some Christian end. During the Renaissance, however, a large part was diverted to other channels, and, it was generally believed, contributed to the "scandalous luxury" of the Roman court. The Pope had agreed that the Archbishop of Mainz, Erasmus' friend, retain half the booty gathered in his province. Tetzel, entering in state, proclaimed the merits of his wares from the pulpits of the churches, acolytes encouraged the crowds in the streets and clinked their plates and pence while carrying on a merry business. Such a spectacle would have excited little attention a few decades earlier. However, the battle between the humanists and the monks, the writings of Reuchlin, of Erasmus, the political satire of Ulrich von Hutten had kindled a smouldering revulsion in the minds of many of the laity. Unsuspected by pope and prelate Germany was mustering strength for an open revolt.

Furthermore, many were led to hear in Tetzel's words that not only was the punishment for sin remitted, but the sin itself forgiven; that it was not the penitence that mattered, but the money for the dispensation. When Luther's parishioners purchased these letters and declared there was no longer any need either for remorse or penance, Luther, alarmed, composed a critique which opposed in part the general theory of Indulgences and attacked the system which "prefers gold to inner repentance and contrition."³

Unremitting study of the Scriptures, of the philosophy available, and of early German mysticism continually revealed new insights to Luther. He appealed to no "inner light," but to the discernment of a sensitive conscience. Had he not been a "doctor of Holy Scriptures," who felt it his duty to publish his findings,

he might have continued as one of "the pious in the land," remaining in seclusion by inclination and preference. But his gradual disillusionment with respect to the conditions in the Church overcame his ingrained reticence, and he grew bolder in his criticisms of the abuses in the Church reflected in the deplorable spiritual plight of the German laity.

The sale of Indulgences had already been criticized in the fifteenth century. Luther at first attacked only the hollowness and superficiality to which it had degenerated. Given to a simple manner of pious thinking, people accepted the obtainment of Indulgences as synonymous with attainment to "perfect grace," and this Luther considered a "heathenish" interpretation. It was a return to "pagan ways" which readily deteriorate into a rejection of a spiritual Christianity. Clearly enough, however, the acquisition of Indulgences and outer sacrifice was a simpler and more comfortable way than the venture into the world of strange, unknown, new ideas.

NINETY-FIVE THESES

Luther recognized that while the human system of penitence and asceticism as practiced by the Church might prove to be an outer fortress of security against original sin and its consequences, and so be useful in practical life, it in fact shackled spiritual creativity and therewith obstructed the approach to the eternal values lodged in the religious concepts of guilt, salvation, freedom, world, God. Furthermore, he felt that the Church was involved in a form of idolatry in its usurpation of the majesty of God. It proclaimed itself the mediator of God's judgment and divine mercy without itself being subject to that same judgment or in need of that same mercy. On the Eve of All Saints Day, October 31, 1517, this Augustinian monk, priest-pastor and professor of theology at the University of Wittenberg, posted ninety-five theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg as a challenge to a thorough study and elucidation of the practice and truth involved in the sale of Indulgences: *Disputation on the Elucidation of the Efficacy of Indulgences*.⁴ This act made Luther the initiator and focal point of the religious revolution fought out in the first thirty years of the sixteenth century.

The position of the Church in regard to Indulgences had not been defined; Luther therefore invited theologians and clergy to public debate. Since the *Theses* were directed to an academic audience, they were written in Latin. There was no response to this invitation. However, Luther had hesitantly sent copies to friends, and after the elapse of a fortnight the *Theses* were, without Luther's assistance, translated into German and spread far and wide. A storm swept through Germany, for here the central tenet of grace and salvation as practiced in the Late Middle Ages was being questioned. There was instant approval everywhere. Albrecht Dürer sent the hitherto unknown monk some of his etchings and woodcuts as a sign of esteem and encouragement. What had been Luther's own personal encounter with God assumed dimensions of world-historical import. And the modern age was born from out "the activity of God" in one individual.

Though it was customary thus to announce and defend propositions in public debate, it was an act of extraordinary courage to proclaim the *Ninety-five Theses*; for in them Luther was attacking an old and powerful institution, which had long used fire and sword to exterminate any taint of heresy. And striking at the authority of the Church in the matter of contrition, penitence, and forgiveness of sin must surely be considered heresy. Moreover, Johann Tetzel was a member of the Court of Inquisition and was selling the Indulgences with the complete approval of the papal authorities.

The popularity of the *Theses* makes evident that the religious sentiment of the nation was disturbed; that the feeling prevailed, that the Pope was misusing his prerogative. Since some of the Western nations had closed their doors to the sale of the letters of Indulgence, the Roman Church had concentrated its efforts in Germany and made it the scene of operation for this convenient source of revenue. And as the demands and needs of the papacy grew, the exploitation of the victim increased in extensiveness and complexity. It is therefore not surprising that Luther's *Ninety-five Theses* should have aroused such general response. The traffic in Indulgences furnished a patent attestation to ecclesiastical degeneracy. All accusation of secularization and avarice in the Church, every outcry against the moral deterioration of the priest-

hood, all clamor against the Papists and their expropriation of the German purse converged in the opposition to these papal letters. Moreover, the layman desired a purified and simpler doctrine of penitence.

At first the special grievances of an Augustinian monk and professor of theology did not cause too great a stir within the papal hierarchy, for greater things were afoot in the play of power politics between Hapsburger, House of Valois, and Pope, in domestic restlessness, and in the sinister look which the social bitterness among the lower classes was assuming. Criticism of the abuses in the Church was not a new thing: much of the humanistic literature of the day was merciless, moralistic satire, or it was exhortative with respect to the spiritual decline so evident in the Church. To be sure, Luther sent copies and reports to his bishop as well as to Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz. But Rome and the hierarchy seem to have been wholly unaware of the significance of the revolution.

Though the *Ninety-five Theses* used the "form" of humanistic attacks, Luther's process of thought since 1513, as indicated in the commentaries on the *Psalms* and on the *Epistle to the Romans*, was formulating a new conception of the meaning of grace, owning no affinity to the Roman dogma of salvation. Luther himself did not foresee the scope of his revolutionary thinking. He was and wanted to be nothing more than a loyal steward and expounder of Scriptures. And in the early years Erasmus was still sympathetic, as were Dr. Eck and Thomas Murner, all bitter opponents later.

The *Ninety-Five Theses* by no means probes the whole scandal and the abuses involved in the letter of Indulgence. Luther attacks only the un-biblical, unchristian, conscienceless claims made for it. Forgiveness of sin requires penitence on the part of the sinner, grace and sanctification on the part of God's love for man, not human merit or money. Not all the assertions made in the *Theses* stood fast before Luther's further development. As a matter of fact he adds the statement, that he knows himself to be "fallible." If a better way has been revealed to anyone, he will gladly follow it. For he was not so "mad" as to prefer his own opinion to any other. And as he gained deeper insight he

promptly admitted any modification of his belief or judgment in conformity always with the words written Spalatin in 1518: "I can be mistaken and after recognizing an error change my mind."⁵ Three years later at Worms he uttered these words: "Rather would I lose limb and life than forsake the clear Word of God."⁶ But in those portions which remained his unshaken conviction, the *Ninety-five Theses* protested essentially against the separation of religion from ethical practice, and against the theory that forgiveness of sin and freedom from punishment are paramount in Christianity.

Luther stressed to the very end that true contrition can be born only out of love for the good, that it alone can beget true hatred of sin and the strength to struggle against it; that from the love of the good alone can proceed the spontaneity and readiness to do good, the birth of a new life, the center of which must be Christ. Without contrition because of sin, forgiveness is impossible. There must be deep inner sorrow for sin. The purpose of amendment and the sorrow must arise out of love of God and out of the realization of failure to respond to His grace. Contrition must proceed not from hate, but from love. Over and against his sin, thanklessness, and abuse of God's gifts, the believer must hold up the loving-kindness and benediction poured out upon him by the Father whose love gave His Son and imparts His Holy Spirit.

This contemplation will awaken hatred of self and love of God. This alone is true repentance. But that which springs from fear of hell, and from shame in the feeling of disgrace brought about by sin, as practiced by the Church, is short-lived. True contrition must begin with, must spring from, and be sustained by love of righteousness and love of God.⁷ It is the Christian's duty to live his faith, to move and have his being in that Reality, which through the tortures of hell he has found and realized to be his God. Clearly Luther was struggling not for a new form of life for the nation, but for a new recognition of truth, for reverence and awe in the presence of the will of God rightly understood, for a new manner of willing and doing through grace, in faith, by the strength of the eternal and unchangeable love uniting God with man.

The particular, new, and abiding aspect in Luther's religious conception was his emphasis upon and his clarification of the judgment of God on the one hand, and on the other, man's gradual approach to assurance of salvation through His mercy and righteousness. There was further a deep consciousness of His sublimity, His might, and activity in all — an activity whose goal is grace. This appears in a sermon as early as August, 1516. Of the words Luke 1:49: "For he that is mighty has done unto me great things, and holy is his name," Luther says: "Perfect praise of God is here most briefly expressed: He is mighty, that is, He alone does and effects all things."⁸ The Mighty One is not alone able to do, but is the active one, He does do, He effects all things in all. Luther's attention here centers on the deed, the imparting of divine grace by the Unfathomable, the Ineffable that God is. For *Deus est absconditus et incomprehensibilis*:⁹ beyond all thinking and conceiving God is hidden, shrouded in mystery.

Even before 1517 Luther distinguished between Law and Gospel. He established that Law is the mirror in which our imperfections, insufficiency, sin may be seen: that out of sin arises the need of salvation. But of prime importance and inexhaustible in meaning is the fact that salvation is the deed of God's free grace. In 1516 he interpreted Psalm 143:5: "'the works of God . . . and the deeds of God's hands' are the believers whom He begets and creates in mercy; this is done without their co-operation, through Him they are and become new creatures in Christ. The works however are the deed and sufferance [of God's activity], which God works through them; created thus and in this they are co-workers."¹⁰ That is, the believers themselves are now active and put to use all individual physical and spiritual gifts. This their work however derives from the grace active in them, the source and impulse to all activity.

Luther aspired to neither fame nor acclaim. He reiterated that he was, and wished to be, nothing more than a "Doctor of Holy Scriptures," and this entails a call and duty to search out the truths of Holy Writ, to teach them and to defend them against all attacks.¹¹ The Middle Ages had taught that the way to salvation lay in faith in Christ Jesus. But now Luther asked: What does that mean? Holy Writ demands faith, but also the works of

faith. What is the relation of one to the other, what is "faith," what are "good works?" What must I do to attain to redemption? In how far can I earn it? What must God do? These were pressing questions and Luther was driven to find and formulate answers not yet formulated nor recognized as the essential truths of Christianity.

These questions demanded answers, and Luther forced Rome to face them and to come to some decision, a decision singularly consequential: the hazy indefiniteness of the past, satisfactory to the papacy, must be dispelled. Rome must either agree with him or it must state its own contrary view expressly, and give it the validity of Church dogma. He asked merely that whatever directly contradicted the Bible be eliminated. He was quite willing that that for which the Bible offers no regulation remain.

Acclaim and Defense

Luther was almost terrified by the widespread acclaim he received. He had simply wanted to discuss the defilement in the Church with his fellow churchmen and to find a way to its cleansing. To this end he continued writing in Latin. However, when the opponent cried out in loud voice, he was forced into a struggle which he had neither desired nor foreseen. He, the humble monk, had no intention of engaging in battle against an institution established a thousand years. But he was certain that this Church, which he revered, needed urgent attention. Forced to scholarly disputation and further research and study, he gradually arrived at the fullness of his reformatory recognition of truth. Conscientious study of the Bible, the one source of the Christian religion, revealed to him the pure Word of God, which human manipulation had through centuries withheld from utterance and declaration by substituting ambiguity and obscuration. It was Luther's duty and his battle to restore the pure doctrine in its divinity, free from all tarnish and distortion of scholastic-ecclesiastical tradition.

Since nothing was done to rectify the matter of Indulgences, Luther set about examining other aspects of the Church, especially its doctrine. He presented new Theses on sin and grace at Heidelberg in 1518, and his new manner of debate on central religious

questions held his audience by the subtle and irresistible force of his convictions. In the same year he was invited to Rome on the charge of heresy, instituted by the Dominicans. Acceptance of the invitation would mean death at the stake.

Fully aware of this fact and deeply troubled by the exigency compelling him, Luther resorted to the practice in vogue in the Late Middle Ages; he appealed to the Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony, the qualified helper. The Elector responded—not because he shared Luther's convictions. He never publicly confessed to them, nor did he ever discuss them personally with Luther. In 1518 Frederick was still engrossed in collecting reliques. He possessed one of the largest collections in Germany. But pious Frederick considered himself the Christian father of his people and it was his duty to have any matter subject to his decision carefully examined by competent judges. Should Luther's cause be from God, Frederick would not suppress it. He would rather, he declared, be a wanderer in the land with staff in hand than act against God. And the famous "doctor" on the faculty of his university was protected because Frederick feared and loved God. The Elector of Saxony therewith established the close relationship between Luther and the sovereign princes of Germany, and made possible the continuation of the work of the Reformation.

Thus Luther was permitted to defend himself in Germany, at the Diet of Augsburg, 1518, convened to consider a crusade against the Turks. Pope Leo X granted this favor inasmuch as at this moment he was determined to hinder the ascendancy of Charles V as Emperor of the "universal" Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and to this end sought the good will of the Elector Frederick. In the hour of world-historical decision in religious matters Leo X thought only of the secular dominion of the Papal See in Italy and the threat to its power by Spanish superiority in the hands of a future Charles V. Furthermore, the vain and inexperienced papal diplomat Karl von Miltitz beclouded the issue at stake in the new heresy of this "quarrelsome and wrangling monk." Thus, by virtue of the paramount importance of power politics in Rome Luther was saved. In October, 1518, a papal legate, Cardinal Cajetan, was sent to Germany to quiet the commotion raised by Luther. Cajetan and Luther met in debate at the Diet in Augsburg.

The Italian, the most important scholasticist of the time and the link between Thomas Aquinas and later Spanish Scholasticism, was perhaps the only one to suspect the grave implications of the *Theses*. Luther's breach with Rome was quite apparent to this Cardinal Cajetan.

Luther's inner groping and growth continued. Even now he suspected that the papacy by its very entanglement in error and secular affairs might be the antichrist prophesied to appear at the end of days to tempt men and seduce them from Christ. The tone of his polemics grew sharper and more immoderate as in his conviction the burden of proof was steadily augmented that he was fighting the instrument of Satan on earth. At the disputation with the controversialist, Dr. Johann Eck in Leipzig, 1519, he asserted that even the Church might err, indeed, had often erred, as at Constance, 1415. This placed Luther beside John Hus, the revolutionary heretic burned at the stake a century earlier.

Spontaneous response greeted Luther's works. Men, reflective and searching, were attracted by his incomparable profundity, by the purity of his devotional and theological tracts. Political activists like Sickingen and Hutten took delight in the fierce humor and frankness of his polemics. Humanists and others formed cells for the purpose of studying and discussing Luther's works. The Swiss reformer Zwingli came from one such cell. These circles sent out reform literature of their own. Though their understanding of Luther's religious insights might be imperfect, their enthusiastic support bore witness to a sincere desire for a simpler approach to the Christian message. In 1518 the first collection of Luther's Latin works was printed in Basel. The German press could hardly keep abreast of Luther's current tracts. His writings were eagerly read in France, Spain, and Hungary. The humanists rejoiced in Luther, a new co-worker — so they thought. Hutten and Sickingen offered their knightly help, which Luther refused; Erasmus recommended the works of Luther to the Archbishop of Mainz.

REFORM WITHIN THE CHURCH OF ROME

Luther's paramount thought was to bring about clarification and order within the Church. Separation from the Church did not

occur to him. For over and above that which he considered as error in dogma, error particularly in the practice of the Roman Church, much remained that he accepted as truth. He frequently asserted this belief in the following and in similar words: "Despite all, God has maintained with might and marvel, that holy baptism, that texts from the Gospel have continued on the pulpit. . . . Wherever these articles remain, there the Church and some believers are still to be found. Surely therefore Christ with the Holy Spirit has dwelt here with His people and has kept them in His faith."¹² In all sincerity he wished to revive the good that was now obscured and suppressed, that cried out for resurrection and expression. He did not think of introducing innovations, he wanted to demonstrate and prove that through all ages all true Christians adhere to the same truths, and these he would revivify. He protested against his preaching being called a "new faith," for it was the Word of God, written in the Scriptures by Prophet and Apostle. He contended that everyone ought to read this Word for himself. Thus he prepared the way to freedom of intellect. His great concern was to be loyal to Holy Scriptures, to defend the Bible against every attack, for "the text of Holy Writ is too powerfully explicit and present"¹³ to permit of any human alteration. Thus, he was engaged in the reform of the Church within the Church.

As the study of Holy Writ confirmed Luther's conviction of the sinner's insufficiency in his own salvation, he came to realize simultaneously that non-Christian sources had darkened the truth of the Gospel and that ancient philosophy must be the responsible source. Greek philosophy does not know the Christian God; its system of ethics is built upon natural man, who in Christian thinking is sinful because fallen away from God. The ancients introduced the erroneous theory that man might depend upon his own strength, wisdom, and righteousness, and in the end make himself the measure and center of being. And Luther found this esteem accorded to human endeavor fused with the Christian religion in the Roman Church. He discovered Aristotle, the greatly revered master of pagan philosophy, in Occam and Biel, then in Thomas, Scotus, and in Peter Lombard. He was forced to attack this philosopher par excellence of the Christian Middle Ages, whose system had helped in the fashioning of Scholasticism, and whose observa-

tions and conclusions he had to question on pain of being thought heretical. And even as Erasmus, in his *Foreword to the New Testament*, refuted the current assumption that a theologian must be acquainted with Aristotelian philosophy, so Luther advanced to a decisive and trenchant differentiation between religion and ethics. With one stroke he undermined Aristotelianism and therewith scholastic theology.

That is not to say that Luther disdained classical literature; indeed with certain reservations he greatly admired the ancients and frequently alluded to them. His sitting in judgment on Aristotle was not devoid of respect for the Greek teacher and thinker. His personal disinclination toward Aristotle had its source in the philosopher's "frosty attitude toward religion," and in the recognition that the inevitable moralism attending natural ethics had seeped into Scholasticism and dragged after it the intellectualistic apparatus of antique philosophy. This had ushered in the present confusion in the living Gospel and had stifled the heartbeat of true religion. Aristotelian ethics and the New Testament are, as Luther knew, distinct in origin, meaning, and consequence.

Luther's new understanding of Christianity as faith, life, and strength, was not arrived at by comprehension and intellectual speculation primarily; he ascertained that the heart of religion is knowing, not perceiving; faith, not reason; life, not dogma. Therefore religion and philosophy, the practical knowledge of salvation and rational cognizance are diverse, and religion must be freed from pure metaphysics and purely rationalistic ethics.

Luther opposed the domination of philosophy in religion, for it depended upon the light of reason. He insisted that philosophy, in whatever manner commingled with religious experience, be humbly subservient to the direction of the Holy Spirit, to the glory of the Saviour, and to the grace of God. By disjoining the realms of philosophy and religion, Luther assured each a free course and development within the conditions and laws peculiar to each.

He praised Aristotle's *Logic*, *Rhetoric*, *Poetics*, *Politics*, and in later years even his *Ethics*, in certain particulars; but he condemned his *Physics*, *Metaphysics*, and, on the whole, his *Ethics*. He could not accept Aristotle's view of God, a God in whom there is no trace of omnipotence, omniscience, righteousness, or

prescience. He repudiated further Aristotle's inference of the infinitude of motion, the eternity of the world, his derivation of the soul, and his denial of individual immortality. Aristotle's theory of the free will was unacceptable, as was his construction of the goal, means, and staying power of an ethical life. Above all, Luther deplored Aristotle's blindness to the radical evil in man's nature. Despite this, however, Luther maintained throughout life that the study and assimilation of Aristotle's ideas and dialectic was harmless and even useful to him whose spirit was imbued with true humility in Christ.

Luther had no intention of disestablishing the philosopher as such. He knew Aristotle very well, and better than those who called themselves the Greek thinker's disciples. He was well aware that Aristotle could not know the Christian truth nor the doctrine of grace. But it was his duty to arouse from sleep and to stir to alertness and vigilance. For many who confessed to the revelation of God in Christ and His message to men gave undivided allegiance to the pagan, to his teaching of natural morals, the golden mean, and his deification of the human will. He had to warn against the ethical concept which proclaimed that goodness must be sought in the realization of man's specific nature, in the complete exercise of the functions that make him a human being, and that thus will he achieve his chief purpose in life, namely, happiness. Only from this point of view can Luther's aspersive condemnation of "the enemy of Christ," "the pagan beast," "pernicious destroyer of the pure doctrine" be understood. This opprobrium subjects the idol of Scholasticism, revered but a little less than Christ, to critical analysis. For Luther was convinced that Christianity can in no wise be identified with pagan ethics and cosmology, even as the living experience of grace bears no relation to acquired knowledge, or the transforming power of faith to rationalistic moralism. Luther's religion afforded him a discernment deeper than that of Scholasticism and endowed with a vigor and competence far stronger than all the resources of Humanism.

Thus, in the light of the love discovered in the Gospel, the Church to which he belonged needed correction and reformation, not division. In 1520 he protested that he had never approved a schism, and that he would not in all eternity approve it.¹⁴ And a

year later he wrote that he would not incite to "blasphemous judgment and to the danger of hatred and envy," for whatever he did was done "for the sake of Christian truth." If he wrote too strictly and harshly, he asked his opponents to forgive him. "For God knows I should regret heartily if I were to act wilfully and by design in an unchristian manner, or if I were to teach, preach, write, or speak in the pulpit or in school anything opposed to God and to the soul's salvation. Furthermore, as a submissive, obedient son of the holy Christian Church, I have often and in diverse ways offered to stand before my opponents in public disputation, to be shown a better Christian teaching from Holy Scriptures or to have my views examined."¹⁵ He would gladly defer to fair judgment, if he were proved wrong on the basis of the Word. He pursued his course "to the glory of God and the welfare of Christianity, in accordance with my oath and duties as a humble doctor of Holy Scriptures."¹⁵ However, his efforts toward agreement with his opponents remained fruitless; they "scold me a heretic, a severer of Christian concord . . . secretly and publicly without ceasing, which however I forgive them with all my heart."¹⁵ He remained within the Roman Church until he was excommunicated. "However, the Church would not endure me, it cast me out and expelled me from its midst."¹⁶ And yet his zeal had desired only to help. In September, 1519, he wrote: "They must know that they err when they say that I am not with the Roman Church; I, who love her sincerely, not only the Roman, but the whole Church of Christ."¹⁷

It should be noted that when Luther inveighed against the "Roman Church," he was not necessarily attacking the "Catholic Church," for the two concepts were not identical in his day. It was usual for the sixteenth century to differentiate between the specific "Roman" Church and the "Catholic," that is, the universal, ecumenical Church. In the bull of excommunication issued against Luther, Leo X used this distinction by calling the "Roman Church" the mother of all other Churches.

Long after the Church had rejected him, Luther still did not think of establishing a new Church beside the old. In 1530 he considered the possibility of one ecclesiastical community for all under the Roman episcopacy. He addressed a circular letter to the bishops during the Diet at Augsburg, 1530: "Set the teaching of the Gospel

free, let us spiritually serve the poor who desire devoutness. We beg of you not to persecute or prohibit this. . . . Thus shall we let you remain what you are: and we shall teach that you be permitted to be princes and lords, that you keep your possessions, for the sake of peace; this the Hussites and Wycliffites did not do, nor are any of the enthusiasts or fractious spirits even now willing so to do. If you can re-establish the episcopal dignity, I for my part shall be glad to give my help and advice thereto.”¹⁸

In 1528 he reported to a good friend: “I wonder how often we offered, and still volunteer daily, that if the pope and all of them would agree not to force us to teach anything contrary or to live contrary to the Word of God, we should gladly and willingly accept and support everything, which they might draw up and command. We have never desired and do not even now desire anything except that we might teach and keep God’s Word and Holy Writ freely; my many booklets are a certain and strong witness to this. . . . But that is precisely the quarrel.”¹⁹ He and the Evangelicals were willing to concede even more. “Indeed, we should even keep all commandments of the pope in such things as God has not commanded, that is, commandments pertaining to worldly affairs . . . provided they plead a secular cause and do not proffer a spiritual pretext.”²⁰ This too fell on deaf ears.

In 1533 Luther could sincerely assert: “Up until now, as especially at the Diet of Augsburg, we humbly assured the pope and the bishops that we did not want to break their canonical law and authority; but, as long as they do not force us to unchristian articles, we should gladly be ordained and ruled by them, also we should be glad to help maintain such their law and authority; but we were not able to achieve or attain it; they would rather force us away from truth and [persuade us] to their falsehoods and abominations, or they would have us dead.”²¹ Luther, the Evangelical teacher, preacher, expounder of Scriptures, was wholly absorbed in the heart’s free faith; upon this foundation must the Church, as a communion of saints and believers, be built. Not only must the Church of Rome grant the personal priesthood of each Christian and therewith freedom of faith, but it must recognize and acknowledge this inherent need and indestructible right of the human soul.

Lamentations, wailings of doubt and temptation beset him, urged

him to surrender his duties as "Doctor of Scriptures," to withdraw to his cell and give his life to seclusion and study. "In the early days I should gladly have subjected myself to the pope and his priesthood and offered obedience, but they would not accept my humility and obedience, but insisted, as they do today, that I profane God, deny Christ, and call His Gospel sacrilege. Before I do that, I should rather, God willing, and if it were possible, be burned for it ten times at the stake."²²

It was his earnest wish to reform the Church within the Church. "Nothing could please me more than that those who disagree with us were completely at one with us: thereto no death could be so bitter that I would not gladly suffer it."²³ This wish was not fulfilled. The Roman hierarchy would not "set free" the Gospel in which Luther and his followers were finding peace of soul; it would not grant freedom to this faith, but pronounced it anathema.

RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD AND SELF

Luther's breach with the one Holy Church was not an act of wilfulness; it was an inescapable step dictated by a personal, sensitive consciousness of responsibility to self and to God; it was dictated by an acute and vigilant conscience. Alone and in inner restlessness and anguish, in the "Now" of the ego's temper, Luther appeared before the divine Judge and Giver of Law and Commandment. And he, as man, possessed of a self, selfish since Adam's fall, was found to be full of sin. He knew further that it is wholly irrelevant to the Judge whether he had appropriated to himself the means of grace offered by the Church, whether any meritoriousness of his works had found favor with the saints who interceded for him with Heaven's Queen. The question confronting Luther was no longer how man may most surely earn the grace of God, but whether he deserves it at all. God is almighty, eternal, infinite; man is impotent, sinful, bound by time and space. No way leads from creature to Creator, and the gulf can not be bridged by orison, confession, fasting, sacrifice, castigation, pilgrimage, or asceticism as such, nor by speculation, nor by Indulgence. These establish no prerogative and right to His grace.

Luther experienced that the estrangement between "Holy" God and radically sinful man can be reconciled only by God's recog-

nition and direct acceptance of man. All externalization and materialization of the means of grace, all conscious calculation is futile in achieving forgiveness and tranquillity. He struggled with this Holy God, he hated Him who demands the impossible of man, who gives commandments which sinful man can not fulfill, and yet judges and condemns him to eternal death. Still Luther could not free himself from this God, whom he felt so close, whom he hated, whose wrath he fled, and whom he was compelled to love. Then he discovered that the one and true salvation is found in that inner way to God acclaimed by St. Paul in his letter to the Romans 3:28: "Therefore we conclude that man is justified by faith, without the deeds of Law." Salvation by faith alone, the free love of God made accessible to all who accept His promise of grace!

A similar passage, finally understood, proved to be a revelation and salvation to Luther. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, "The just shall live by faith," Romans 1:17. In his early years he construed "God's righteousness" to denote a wrathful justice which knows no mercy, which is given over to the exclusive task of meting out punishment. Luther's resentment toward God grew when he discovered that the New Testament Gospel here added to the burden of the sinner already miserable enough before the Just Judge of the Old Testament. He hated that word "righteousness" of God, as he recalled in 1545, a year before his death, which according to the custom and tradition of all scholars he had been taught to understand philosophically, namely as the so-called formal and active righteousness, according to which God is just and punishes the unjust sinner. "I wished that God had never revealed the Gospel. For who could love this wrathful, judging God who condemns? Until finally, illumined by the Holy Spirit, I carefully considered the passage: 'The just shall live by faith!' Then I began to understand the meaning of the righteousness revealed in the Gospel, the righteousness by which a merciful God judges us through faith. Then I felt myself wholly reborn and arrived in paradise itself through open doors. At once the entire Scriptures assumed a different aspect."²⁴ In those early years he realized, as had Thomas Aquinas before him, that the righteousness of God implies a need

of man's justification. But how is that brought about? The answer had been: God's love must be won, and by virtue of the righteousness instilled by it the sinner is justified before God.

This presumed righteousness, however, was of no avail to Luther. He knew that he, the sinner, did not possess the true love of God, and he knew further that of himself he was utterly incapable of procuring it. If God's forgiveness depends upon the subjective righteousness of man, then he, Luther, could never achieve it. Up to about 1509 he stood helplessly face to face with the fearful truth, that despite all his effort and exertion in penitence, sin still remained. For it is "pure madness"²⁵ as he wrote in 1515, for the sinner to assert that he could of himself love God and thus prepare to receive the grace which makes pleasing unto God. Two years earlier he had found the basic truth of the Reformation that in faith in Christ the sinner has a merciful God with all His righteousness; that his own natural efforts in winning forgiveness are vain, are not needed; that it is not a question of justice and reprisal on the part of God, nor of worthiness on the part of man. This freed him from the Pope and from the concept of the scholasticists, that he could earn and achieve a merciful God by means of piety on his part. He now knew that God, who judges, also awakens the love for His righteousness in the sinner. Hence: "The just shall live by faith" suddenly communicated a new truth: "If a righteous life must come through faith, then the righteousness of God must mean salvation to each believer; as a consequence the fact that He justifies and saves us constitutes the righteousness of God. I recognized the righteousness of God as that compassion which regards us as just. That was salvation to me, most wretched one."²⁶ He now saw the compassion of the Father which imputes His own righteousness through His Son, and by that means kindles in man the true love of God.

The formula of Scholasticism which accepted that man, a sinner in his natural state, leaves that state when he is justified, proved invalid. Luther discovered that in his relation to God he was both simultaneously. He, the sinner, remains a sinner even while he is justified. Sinner and justified at the same time, that is the paradoxical formula of the new truth. Of his own strength man can never overcome his selfishness, and therefore he can not stand

before Holy God. But the self-centered sinner is justified, for God, who is pure Love, forgives his sins, draws him into Himself, and in that He gives him faith. He also endows him with His righteousness. Herewith a new world was found in the realm of religion, new theological concepts, and a new religious reality.

With this envisagement of man's relation to God, the religious possibility of a visible Church as an institution disappeared and with it the need of a priesthood sacramentally consecrated. This meant that the foundation was removed from under pope, cardinal, bishop, priest, monk, and nun, for their mediation had become superfluous. It is the trust of faith alone which establishes man's reconciliation to God, it alone makes human life acceptable before God, and upon it alone is built the invisible Church of all those united in the communion of such a faith, sanctified and sanctifying through Christ.

THREE MANIFESTOS — 1520

1. *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*

As the break with Rome grew inevitable, Luther broadened his position to include a widespread program of reform. Life, social and religious, was revolutionized by the appearance of three manifestos he published in 1520. The revolt of Henry IV against Gregory VII was in comparison "sweet as violets and roses," is the reported lament of the papal nuncio Aleander. The first, *An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation: Von des christlichen Standes Besserung*,²⁷ *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation: Concerning the Improvement of Christian Society*, deals with economic, pedagogic, political issues, intent however on the liberation of personal and religious life from all material and institutional bondage. In Part One Luther attacked the Romanist assumption, first, that the Church should presume to rule over secular realms, and claim supremacy in temporal affairs; second, the assumption, that only the pope might interpret Holy Scriptures; and third, that the pope alone should be authorized to call Church Councils.

In Part Two he considered matters to be discussed and regulated by a Church Council, as the duties of pope and cardinal. Part Three urges that certain problems be laid before temporal

authority or before a General Council. His argument takes the position that temporal affairs ought not to be submitted to Rome since Rome is not acquainted with German customs; the emperor ought not to be crowned by the pope; the pope's prerogatives do not extend to secular rule; bishops are pastors and are to be chosen by the congregations; bishops and priests ought to marry in order to curtail the immorality incident to celibacy; "one can not place straw and fire side by side and forbid that it either smoke or burn." Further, his understanding of the Gospel sees certain practices in the Church as un-biblical, even heathenish, therefore he would disestablish vigils; masses for the soul; the sale of Indulgences; the celebration of the mass; chapels and shrines for pilgrimages. Mendicancy must be eliminated and a system of care and support for the poor inaugurated. Those thought guilty of heresy must be properly instructed in the Word of God. Burning at the stake must cease; or has it come to pass that the executioner is "the most learned of doctors"?

Part Four turns to the domestic scene. Here he upbraids the luxury in dress, the excessive use of "aromatics" (*Spezereien*). He minces no words in berating the intemperance in eating and drinking among his German countrymen, this self-indulgence and dissipation which by extension includes the brothel.

In its promotion of ecclesiastical-political reform this address to the nobility was the peak and conclusion of similar tracts which had been appearing for a century. Like its predecessors it demands that the secular government call a General Council to remedy the many ills in the Church. Among other things Luther proposes the elimination of the Church state, the limitation of clerical jurisdiction, limitation likewise of monastic orders, reform of the monasteries and convents; an end to the many pilgrimages which he designates as being founded on superstition. Though the religious reform must be directed primarily toward the spiritual life, it must also include the secular social order. There must be reform of the schools, of the universities, there must be schools for all, schools for girls also; there must be prohibition of usury, also limitations of monopolies and commercialism, correction of abusive capitalism as practiced by the House of Fugger in Augsburg. Most urgent of all are: the introduction of general education for

the people, honorable employment, diligence, moderation, and a God-pleasing life.

It was Luther's contention that papal tyranny in matters religious as well as secular should be curbed. But how effect this, and how bring about "the summoning of a truly free Council," which all the world desired? The knights, Ulrich von Hutten and Franz von Sickingen, would do it by means of force. But Luther differed from them in spirit and in method, as his Introduction makes clear: "The first thing to be done in this matter is, that in all seriousness we be on our guard not to initiate action in reliance on great power and reason, even though the power of all the world were ours. . . . We must assuredly know, that we are not fighting with men in this cause, but with the princes of darkness, who, to be sure, may fill the world with war and bloodshed, but are not to be conquered by this means. We must despair of temporal power and undertake the matter in humble trust, in earnest prayer seek the help of God, and be mindful of nothing except the distress and need of miserable Christendom, irrespective of what wicked people may have deserved."²⁸ It is man's soul that is being saved. The misfortune is but increased by the use of force; all action must be undertaken in fear and humility before God.

But all of this is peripheral to the central revolutionary thought expressed for the first time in Luther's writings: the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Whereas the Church averred that only the pope might interpret the Scriptures, Luther asserts that all Christians are priests. "Are not all of us priests? Why, then, should we not be able to perceive and judge what is right and wrong in belief? . . . What is the meaning of St. Paul's: 'He that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man'?"²⁹ Furthermore, each Christian can now, as "a consecrated priest, approach God joyously and carry to Him his own need and the needs of others. And according to His promise, we may be certain, that whatever we ask shall be heard and affirmed."³⁰

The distinction made between the ecclesiastical estate of pope, bishop, priest, monk, and nun and a wordly estate of prince, lord, artisan, and peasant are, Luther asserts, mere human invention. For all Christians are of truly spiritual estate, members of one body, in virtue of one baptism, one Gospel, one faith. There is no

separate and special ecclesiastical class owning particular spiritual authority and privilege. There is but one Christendom, to which all who have been baptized belong, one body of Christ, in which all are members, clergy and laymen alike. "This is a spiritual priesthood, common to all Christians, wherein we all are priests with Christ, that is, we are children of the Most High Priest Christ. We need no priest or mediator other than Christ. . . . Each may pray Christ through himself in Christ and appear before God, Rom. 5:2, as it was made known to Isaiah 65:24: And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. Thus each Christian is also instructed and taught by God Himself."³¹

This witness of the Scriptures abrogates ecclesiastical priesthood in the New Testament; for prayer, approach to God directly, and the teaching of God's Word is now acclaimed the own possession of each man. "To what purpose does one need a priest, if neither mediator nor preacher is required? . . . For Christ alone and none other is the mediator and teacher of all Christians, I Tim. 2:5,7. We ourselves, tutored, approach God and can accordingly teach and instruct those who are not yet priests, that is, Christians. Thus ensues that in the New Testament the priesthood dwells in all Christians, in the spirit alone."³² In his priestly office the Christian brings his gifts to the altar, offers up spiritual sacrifice, when through the Spirit he overcomes the works of the flesh, utters praise and thanksgiving, the fruit of the lips, and "sweetness of heart towards God."³³

In this manner Luther abolished sacerdotalism. Much of the corruption within the Church had grown out of this one root, out of the notion that the Christian priesthood possesses mystical power, conferred through episcopal ordination. But religion, as Luther conceived it, is the devotion of every single soul to the service of God, and does not depend upon this or that done to or for man by a so-called priest. Clergymen, in Luther's understanding, differed from laymen only in that it was their particular duty to teach and preach.

This message *To the Christian Nobility* in its proclamation of the priesthood of the believer abolishes the dualism of the Middle Ages, the separateness of God and world. It radically denies the

exclusiveness of the clergy and the inferiority of secular callings over against the clerical. As long as the believer exercises his calling in Christian intention and conviction, in the knowledge of his responsibility before God, his calling is a divine service and all of human life is invested with a new dignity. Earthly occupation is no longer simply a necessary evil, it is rather engaged upon in observation of God's commands. And the secular prince carries out God's bidding even as does the ecclesiastical prince. Luther was sanguine in his trust in the earthly prince since so many in Germany were sincere in their efforts toward reform. Luther's opponents were the priests, bishops, and the Papists.

In 1533 he explained further the meaning of the priesthood of the Christian. "We are to be called and to be priests by birth . . . for we are born in holy baptism, sanctified through His blood and dedicated through His Holy Spirit. . . . This our inborn and hereditary priesthood . . . is to be exhibited, proclaimed, and extolled in all its glory, so that it may show forth its light and shine like the dear sun. . . . Therefore the Holy Spirit was careful in the New Testament not to permit the name *Sacerdos*, priest, to be applied to any apostle or to any other office, except alone as the name of the christened or Christian, as an inborn, hereditary name in baptism! for in baptism . . . we all are born as priests."³⁴ It is a great and mighty thing, that man, poor, wretched, "a pack of maggots," should come to such honor. "Whosoever has my Word and believes, he is a priest. . . . He who has faith is a king and lord over sin, death, devil, hell, and all misfortune, for faith alone establishes in such possessions and glory. He who has faith has all things, is able to do all things, overcomes all things, and nothing either temporal or external can harm him."³⁵

This judgment exercised by spiritual man, who is a priest, is augmented in its ramifications and meanings throughout Luther's continual growth. It is weighted with an inescapable responsibility. An excursion through its labyrinth reveals Luther's insistence that the Christian may not accept as truth, nor do nor give allegiance to anything which his conscience does not recognize as permitted or commanded by God. He declared dependence upon human authority in spiritual matters rather than upon one's own conscientious convictions to be sin. All that relates to the conscience

or the soul must be probed and examined to establish the certainty of God's will therein. The Christian may turn neither to man nor to the Church if he would know what is permitted, commanded, or forbidden by God. Whereas blind and unquestioning submission was acceptable to the Roman Church, Luther stressed without end that one can speak of a belief only where the individual possesses a truth as his own. Faith is a firm, secure opinion, a sure confidence.

He defined Christian faith as man's dependence, man's "hanging on God."³⁶ This was one of many definitions. The Christian, dependent upon God, is in his own being independent of all other authority. As an independent personality, as a priest, he depends upon God in freedom: not in such manner that his greatest perfection is achieved in blind submission to God's Word; no, but emphatically rather in such manner, that the goal of his striving must be the assurance of the rightness of all his convictions and actions through the Spirit of God. To this end was man created, and it is the sin of sins not to desire this. Such faith and such striving may know weakness of flesh, but it may not be dependent upon human authority. For even he, who contrary to his conscience does that which in itself is right, is guilty of sin; and if he does this thing, right in itself by virtue of human authorization, he has rejected the very foundation of Christianity, he has outraged his own being, his own priesthood.

Weakness of flesh is a sin; it may denote a deficiency in ethical development and in that case this external sin may be healed through growth in grace. Yet — and this is important — it can still be united with a yearning for God. And so, though weakness of flesh is a sin, the not-depending on God is *the* sin, is idolatry, according to Luther. Sin in its very essence is an acting against conscience, against God. And on this principle Luther could say in respect to celibacy that the most grievous infringements of God's commandments in outer deed is less blasphemous than unbelief. Christ Himself said that, rather might knaves enter the kingdom of heaven than the Pharisees and Scribes; and they were after all pious, chaste, and respectable. Why is this? "Because they resisted God's Word and the Gospel; but knaves, though they sin, do not oppose the Gospel. Now the matter stands thus: Who-

ever takes a wife upon the strength of the human ordinance of the [Church] Councils, but not on other grounds, even though he has God's decree and Word concerning it, he despises God's Word in his heart and tramples it under foot. He elevates man above God and trusts man's word and doctrine more than God's Word and teaching. Therefore he acts directly against faith, he denies God Himself and sets man up as his idol in God's place."³⁷ Man's soul is made doubly guilty before God through unbelief, mistrust, contempt, idolatry, and denial of His holy Words.

To question or examine a doctrine enunciated by the Roman Church might be sacrilege in the eyes of the Church. But precisely this kind of submission is the basic sin to Luther. All Christians, spiritual men and priests, are, according to his tract addressed to the Nobility of the German Nation, to judge Scriptures according to their own believing understanding. Now and throughout life he warns and will warn tirelessly, that the Gospel, the message of promise, must be received in the heart, it must become one's own inwardly: for in this manner alone can its truth be experienced. God's Word must not be an outward doctrine merely. To acquiesce in the truths of faith simply upon command is not having them; if they are not subjected to questioning, to examination, if their substance is not touched, acceptance does not become possession. And he who does not possess spiritual truths can not judge spiritually. The reasons that prompted him to persuade, expostulate, and warn the Christian not to yield to human authority in the matter of faith, be it that of the pope, the priest, or Luther himself, will be considered more fully in conjunction with his views on the interpretation of Scriptures.

2. *Concerning the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

The second pamphlet, *Von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft der Kirche, Concerning the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, further emancipated secular life from the cult of the Church. Luther here denies the authority of the priesthood to mediate between the individual and his God and rejects the sacraments except as aids to faith. In this second tract *De captivitate Babylonica*,³⁸ published October 6, 1520, he confesses that while contesting the divine right of papacy he had still granted its human right

as an institution. Now however he knows it to be "the Babylonian empire and the domain of the powerful hunter Nimrod." This Empire imposed its tyranny on human souls particularly through its teachings concerning the sacraments. The Church of Rome recognizes seven sacraments. Luther here admitted the validity of three: the Lord's Supper, Baptism, and Penitence. Captive to Rome they had all been deprived of their inherent freedom.

By withdrawing the cup from the laity in the Lord's Supper human design had been substituted for Christ's own words of institution. Luther could not support this interference in divine matters. He would not use force to effect the required reformation, yet Holy Communion ought to be preserved as Christ established it. This sacrament should not be interpreted externally even though it does not constitute an article of faith.

The doctrine of transubstantiation represented to Luther a second captivity. The Roman Church holds that the bread and wine of the eucharist are changed into the body and blood of Christ by being consecrated. According to Luther the body and blood of Christ are present in the bread and wine, to be sure, but these are not transformed in substance, and bread and wine remain bread and wine. The doctrine of transubstantiation propagated by Thomas Aquinas issued, according to Luther, from an erroneous explication of Aristoteleianism, and is as a consequence human analysis and has no foundation in Scripture. Since rational coercion could never grasp the miracle involved, Luther believed it to be a better course to abide by the simple words of Christ. Consider the unity of the human and divine natures in the person of Christ; the indwelling of the Godhead does not necessitate a transubstantiation of His human nature. Therefore, he concludes, let not the words of the sacrament be made into authoritative dogma, and let each follow his own opinion in the matter.

The Church of Rome was guilty of a third and most serious imprisonment of the soul by its definition of the mass as a good work and sacrifice. The Sacrament of the Altar is a promise of forgiveness of sin and of eternal life to be accepted in faith. It employs outward signs to accentuate the words of promise which are effective at all times and certainly do not need this outer, visible symbol of assurance. Did He not set His rainbow in the skies to make His promises to Noah doubly sure?

However, to declare the mass to be an offering brought unto God is a most grievous offense. The words of Christ are indisputable authority despite all Church Fathers. The elevation of the bread and wine stems from an old Hebrew rite of thanksgiving and is neither an offering nor a sacrifice. In no manner and in no respect is it a question of the work or merit of the believer. The sacrament of the mass is a promise, and a promise can be imparted to him alone who accepts it in faith. A sacrament demands faith in the promises of God, in His forgiveness, in His saving grace, and is potent only in such faith.

Contrition is an act of faith, not a merit. The spirit, truly broken and contrite because of sin, the heart bruised and crushed by the threat attending His Law which has not been kept, trembles in terror before God's commands. But it is faith that prompts contrition. Faith not alone as an utter trust in God and in His promises and goodness, but faith as the acknowledgment, recognition, and acceptance of God's commands and threats as the verity of verities, before which heart and conscience bow; bow before them in bruised and contrite spirit, in contrition begotten of the love of God and righteousness, proceeding from faith as faith in the promise of forgiveness of the Gospel. Where there is faith in the immutable truth of God, there contrition and comfort follow of themselves.

It is false, Luther continues, to teach as does the Roman Church that merit accrues to the sinner who collects, enumerates, and concentrates on his sins, for this teaching does not first and foremost present the true reason and origin of *contritio*, namely faith in the unchangeable truth of God's Law, threat, and promise. The Church of Rome was guilty in so far as it stimulated the sinner to vain occupation with himself and his sin, in so far as it gave impulse to self-torment which sought its own meritoriousness and in the end persuaded itself to joy in sinning for the sake of self-castigation. Who better than Dostoevski's Roskolnikov knows this brooding gratification in suffering and sustained self-inflicted flagellation of mind and spirit?

As for the other Roman "sacraments" — confirmation, marriage, consecration of the priest, extreme unction — they are fallaciously so called, according to Luther, for they lack the visible sign supplied in a sacrament coincident with the promise of grace and

salvation, which is to be accepted in faith and is designated to strengthen faith. Luther remarks in this tract that strictly speaking one should admit of but two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, since in these two alone has God given the outward signs, and actually penitence belongs to baptism. This was his final conclusion a little later.

Marriage is not a specifically Christian institution, it existed from the beginning. No particular Christian promise appends to it; marriages outside the bounds of Christianity are marriages nonetheless. Luther pointed out that there is a difference between this natural order and the order of salvation, to which alone a sacrament relates.

The word sacrament actually connotes: the submersion of the sinful self and the emergence of a reborn, cleansed self. Faith saves even without the use of the sacrament as Jesus pointed out, Mark 16. Scholasticism taught that the sacrament of the New Testament is an effective sign of grace. Luther recalls the assertion of St. Thomas that an efficient grace inheres in the words and the water, and Duns Scotus' claim that God bestows His grace in the sacrament. In sum, both believed that benefits accrue to the receiver of the sacrament though he be dead in sin and totally lacking in faith. Luther took the position that no sacrament is a sacrament unless it is received in faith.

In the *Babylonian Captivity* he was still the seeker, still uncertain about some things. However, he based all his declarations on the fact that the Christian is to find truth in the Scriptures independent of papal or any other authority. Thus only can he escape captivity. The Church is able to differentiate between the Word of God and human words, but the Church is not superior to the Word. The soul, seized by truth, illumined by the divine Spirit, is urged by an inner certainty that this is truth and can thus judge most surely, and in this Spirit-illumined sense the Christian judges all and is judged by none. Christian knowledge is the direct work of the Holy Spirit.

3. *On the Freedom of a Christian Man*

Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen, the third of the tracts issued in 1520 is the most important. It was dedicated and addressed

to the Pope. The sum of a Christian life is contained in a freedom which exalts to liberation from things, from the world. Luther proclaims: "A Christian is a free lord over all things, and subject to no one."³⁹ And: "A Christian is a most dutiful servant in all things and subject to everyone."⁴⁰ The truths are differently stated in I Corinthians 9:19: "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." Romans 13:8: "Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." Luther expounds: "If you would fulfill the commandments and put away all evil desires and sin, as the law commands, believe in Christ, and all grace, peace, and freedom shall be yours. If you believe, you shall have; if you do not believe, you shall not have."⁴¹ Thus is the inner man a free lord through faith, emancipated of all laws and commandments. For the promise of God is clear, brief, consummate: "I have established all things in faith: whosoever has faith, has all things, and is blessed; whosoever has no faith, shall have nothing."⁴² "All his [the Christian's] joy is this, that he serve God gratuitously in free love . . . love and joy in God flow out of faith, and out of love a free, willing, joyous life serving one's neighbor,"⁴³ and this without regard to gratitude or ingratitude, praise or blame, gain or loss. This means that "toward my neighbor I become also as a Christ, as did Christ become [a servant] toward me,"⁴⁴ that I, the Christian, "to whom God has given everything in faith . . . let others share and enjoy all of my possessions and good works . . . so that the gifts of God may flow from one into the other and thus be shared by all."⁴⁵ As Christ became a servant, so he, who fulfills the first commandment, fulfills all, and he becomes to his neighbor what Christ is to him. "A Christian does not live unto himself, but in Christ and his neighbor; in Christ through faith, in his neighbor through love. Through faith he ascends beyond self unto God; from God he again descends through love; and yet remains forever in God and in divine love. . . . Behold, that is the true spiritual, Christian freedom, which delivers the heart from all sins, laws, and commandments: which surpasses all other freedom as heaven surpasses the earth."⁴⁶ For in faith the Christian possesses all things that are Christ's, that are God's.⁴⁷ Christian freedom liberates the heart to do God's will

voluntarily, not out of fear of punishment nor in seeking reward.

Works of asceticism are pleasing to God when they are carried out in the fear of the Lord; not for the purpose of earning salvation, but in the service of God, neighbor, and fellow man. They do not differ from any other wordly activity. God takes delight in the work of a tailor, shoemaker, burgomaster, or prince, if skill and office are diligent in faith and love of man. A work is good only when faith knows no motive except the glory of God.

This tract presented the direct, inward, and complete *unio mystica* of the Christian soul with Christ and the communion of Christians. However, the fact that Luther makes faith in Christ the one and only center of Christian freedom suggests that his mysticism differs from mysticism as such. Luther did not find divine truth, strength of spirit, freedom from anxiety of soul in the "inner light," but in the simple and concrete Word and promise of God. Denial of self and denial of the world actually exalts over the self and over the world and endows with a positive freedom won in Christ. In this freedom, born of the regeneration wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, the Christian is transformed and the world through him. Of and in himself he must perish, no "inner, divine spark" avails.

Basic throughout is Luther's accentuation of faith, the relation of faith to the objective Word of God, in which divine truth is offered; the relation of faith to the Word become incarnate, crucified and exalted, and trust in the Holy Spirit, revealer and mediator of the grace of God the Father. And as our heavenly Father has freely supplied our necessities in Christ, so ought we, by our body and industry, freely to supply the needs of our neighbor; that we all may be as one in Christ, and Christ one in all of us; that is, that we may be true Christians. The Christian man, free in conscience by virtue of faith, is charged with the duty and conduct becoming a Christian brotherhood.

Thus it becomes us to present our faith and righteousness before God in prayer for the pardon and the acquittal of the sins of our neighbor; which we ought so to take upon ourselves and so to labor and travail under, as though they were our own; for so Christ did for us. This is true love, and the true rule of Christian life; and this life will exist where there is true and real faith. And

true faith goes forth with joy and delight in the work of "perfect freedom," that is, it serves its neighbor freely and spontaneously because its own treasure is richly filled with the overflowing abundance it possesses by faith. This is the freedom of the Christian man.

FREEDOM INHERENT IN CHRISTIANITY

The "freedom of a Christian" solved the great task of the age through an idealism spiritually founded. It promoted the interpenetration of the Renaissance and the Reformation through the articulation of the inward with the outward, by planting human conduct in a faith and a love projected into the external world and all relations. "What availeth it the soul, if the body be free, vigorous, healthy, if it eats, drinks, lives as it will? Or, what harm is it to the soul that the body be captive, ill, weak, that it hunger, thirst, and suffer against its will? All of these things do not penetrate the soul either to liberate it or take it captive, to persuade it either to piety or iniquity."⁴⁸ Here the habitual manner of ascetic thinking was given a new accent, and a religious power was imparted to all life, a power that transforms the creative genius of Renaissance-Romanism into the faith of an "I," which, delivered from all corporeal conditionality, bound neither to things, environment, nor materiality, but bound alone to God in faith and love, creates a new natural world, blessed in itself and a blessing to man.

The personal character of religion and with it the thought of religious freedom, unfettered by external powers, the privilege of direct access to God's love and care, and with it metaphysical freedom, was the new, positive conception of Luther, his immeasurable accomplishment for the religious liberation of the individual. And this liberation meant and means that the Christian is able to resolve all problems and chaos; that chaos, whether of the heart, the mind, or of the world, is transformed into order through a love and a faith that bind to God and to man. Faith makes the soul "holy, just, genuinely peaceful, free, and full of all goodness."⁴⁹ The Christian no longer serves selfish inclinations, but finds all his joy and fulfillment in serving God in voluntary love without thought of any reward. "For I would do all things

freely, joyously, gratuitously, as pleases Him, unto such a Father who pours out His possessions to overflowing upon me."⁵⁰

The genuinely religious element is thus freed from the ecclesiastical, and the religious personality is elevated above tradition and all authority claimed by man. To be sure, the Christian is bound to Divine Law, and Divine Grace endows him with wisdom and strength, but precisely for that reason does the subjection of the Christian to human precepts seem to Luther infamous and slavish. "Neither pope nor bishop nor any man has a right to fix [set up as a standard] one single syllable about a Christian, unless it is done with the latter's approval; if it is done in any other manner, it is tyranny."⁵¹ Indeed, "it is known that [even] a Council may err."⁵²

The Roman Church, union of authority, asceticism, and aesthetics, was the bearer of Roman-Germanic culture through the centuries from late antiquity to the Reformation. Individualism inheres in Christianity and it was not in the first instance a product of the Renaissance. Certainly the Renaissance gave wings to the spirit in all realms of adventure and thereby helped to prepare the way for the appearance of Luther. Nonetheless it is the Christian idea that man is destined to a perfected personality by means of a soul seized and formed by that Divine Spirit, which proceeds from the Source of all personal life. Man's actual being rests on a metaphysical Absolute permeative in the universe; and through the pentecostal outpouring of the fire of divinity human freedom springs forth — personality, and "autonomy" of self. Of such complexion is the religious authentication found in Israelitic Prophet and Christian Apostle alike.

Christianity assimilated ideas from Platonism, Stoicism, and from the echoing remnant of a dying antiquity, and envisaged a divine state, a Church, the kingdom of God on earth, individuals united in God. In its great geniuses the Church of the Middle Ages had perpetuated this view, and St. Francis of Assisi had given impetus to the individualizing of man. However, religion came ever more to be the *visible* Church and ceremonial; to an ever greater degree the hierarchy absorbed and monopolized life and activity. Personal independence in religious exercise had been lost. Luther again established that religious experience is an individual expe-

rience; he set the individual into a world in his human aloneness; and he made it the duty of the individual to transform the world to the glory of God. To Luther this phrase "to the glory of God" was the concentrate of the Christian religion. He defined it as the affirmation of God and His will, whether He send joy or sorrow, whether He inflict suffering and death, whether He create in us a new heaven and a new earth. "To the glory of God" requires that God be acclaimed God, that He be to me what He is in Himself: Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier.

On the Freedom of a Christian Man is a Christian canticle, composed as an ode, intense, lofty, ecstatic in its lyricism. With unwonted acumen a searching mind here penetrates to a new perception of the Christian. Here the revelation of religious individualism is expressed in grandeur and simplicity. Here an alert sensibility compounds the energetic and lusty naturalism of the exterior world with the very heart of the Christian religion and gives content to an ethical-religious conception of life in which these two elements interpenetrate and are fused into a new meaning of devoutness. The formula is astonishingly simple: fleeing the world gives way to overcoming the world; the ascetic contemplative life recedes before assiduous exertion in this world; asceticism is replaced by intelligent and voluntary action in this world salutary to all; isolated striving for sanctification is projected into laws that are made a bond of love; a magic-ritualistic church service in church, monastery, and ceremonial performance, a religiosity of compensation, of mercenary bargaining for reward, of chafing traffic fixing degree and amount of merit is superseded by that inward consciousness of God omnipresent, which transforms every day and every hour into a service of God, which transfigures every activity into a mute prayer, every joy into a psalm of thanksgiving; in which every sorrow is a test of faith, every day a gift from on high. And the Christian is dedicated to the good not for the sake of reward, but from inward blessedness and plentitude. The Christian now lives in the world and still does not surrender to it; he is bound to the tasks of life and yet exalted above all creaturehood; he is limited by the finite and is yet free in the infinite. In voluntary love he takes upon himself the yoke of the servant, and in faith seizes the diadem of the king. This is the

Christian personality committed in its every faculty and fibre to the glory of God.

LUTHER'S STRENGTH IN THE FACE OF INCREASED OPPOSITION

When uncompromising partisans of the Church attacked him, Luther eagerly searched Holy Writ and the writings of its early expounders. He discovered much in the Church besides the Indulgences which he had to question. Pope Leo X's attitude was typical of the cultured Italian Renaissance gentleman. He mildly wondered why the faithful in Germany should grow so excited over a purely theological issue. He made honest efforts toward reconciliation, but his agents were haughty, inapt, and bungling, and Luther's convictions had become too firmly grounded to admit of any possibility of recantation. The three pamphlets of 1520 explicitly attacked the prerogatives of the Papal See, they declared the fallibility of pope and Church Council alike and insisted that Holy Scriptures alone be made the basis of faith. Therewith fundamental doctrines of the Roman Church were rejected.

The Pope issued a bull of excommunication against Luther in June, 1520. Cardinal Cajetan lent his help and persuasion. This declared Luther a heretic. The bull was equivalent to an order to the civil authorities to apprehend him and put him to death. Amid a great assemblage of approving Wittenbergers and students, Luther, the following December, consigned the bull to a bonfire and added the books of Canon Law, the codification of all the extraordinary privileges of the medieval Church. Luther was fully aware of the personal risk involved and clearly recognized the historical significance of the act. He knew that from now on death on the funeral pyre awaited him. However, he was the first to burn a papal bull and to escape the stake.

The Luther of 1520 was no longer the Luther of October 31, 1517. The three treatises of 1520 had gradually evolved in the stillness of his cell, through prayer, meditation, through eight years of inward struggle and growth; through grappling with the doctrine of salvation as propounded by the Occamists. Luther knew all too well the numberless pamphlets and volumes, the multiplicity of scholastic literature, the complicated concepts and

subtlety of their argument; through these and beyond them he was forced to a new conception of the way to salvation. His vision had been deepened and widened, his goals had become more significant. He had grown to be the prophet of a new religious view and the creator of new ethical ideals. His authority was God, "In all this [that threatens] I fear nothing. Even if they succeed . . . that I be hated by all men, one thing stands fast in my heart and conscience, this, that I have received it all . . . from God, and into His hands I commit it with joy."⁵³

To be sure, Luther emerged only gradually from the thought world of the Church of Rome. In the progress, especially of the early development of his new faith, there were moments of affliction and besetting doubt. The first utterance of his new views provoked "fuming opposition." Upon cursory examination the propositions brought forth to gainsay his views were valid and Luther felt strongly the power inherent in them. For he, still seeking clarity for himself, knew well at what point his position at the moment might be attacked. Though some aspects of religious truth were revealed to him as in a flash, others were made clear as he grew in stature. However, at all times he sensed hidden profundities of religious truth far more keenly than any opponent. "The devil pleads other, far sharper arguments than they [the opponents] either know or are able to advance."⁵⁴ But even the most piercing darts, aimed at him from whatever rampart, within or without, could not shake his faith. He was sustained triumphantly "against him [Satan], who possesses more strength and cunning in his smallest finger than all popes, kings, and learned men together."⁵⁵

DIET OF WORMS—1521

April 18, 1521, was, in Carlyle's words, the most decisive and most significant day in modern history. Not only was it decisive in secular history, but it was, most important of all, a day of decision in the history of the Christian Church. The young Emperor Charles V had convoked the Diet of Worms, and the wise Elector Frederick of Saxony had insisted on Luther's personal appearance before this secular concourse, to defend his position over and against the Roman Church. Despite warnings from everywhere,

Luther, though excommunicated, was determined to go even if there should be "as many devils in Worms as there were shingles on the roofs." The two opponents were really Charles V and Luther; Charles V on the one hand, willing to risk his empire and authority, his friends, his life for the sake of preserving the Catholic faith and the Roman Church, and on the other Luther, zealous, consecrated, humble, speaking in a subdued voice in order not to offend, but with dark eyes "beaming in confidence and flashing like stars." He was willing, as he said, to endure everything for his Emperor and realm, death and even defamation. But he could not, nor would he, forfeit the right to free proclamation and confession of the Word of God.

In many respects the sixteenth century, and with it the Reformation, was influenced by medieval thinking, and that thinking dictated that Christian faith and the Christian Church belonged to the realm of public concern and was not merely a private affair. If there were abuses in the Church these needed public correction. It would not have occurred to Charles V, who considered himself the supreme secular steward of Christianity, the guardian and governor of the Roman Church, to ignore the revolutionary controversy astir in the Church, nor would he have thought of assigning it to private settlement. Even if princes and cities had been indifferent to it, which they were not, public concern still would have demanded that the issue be clarified before the nation. Discussions of theological matters and disputations concerning dogma had previously been heard at German Diets. The reform Councils of the previous century had made it a prerogative and the duty of the secular government in Germany to be vitally concerned in spiritual questions. Therefore the basic religious problems involved in the Reformation had to be clarified before this Diet, the orderly political representatives of the German nation.

The religious strength active among the people had kindled the Hussite movement in the fifteenth century. It had stirred the German aristocracy to attempt a reform in "head and members" of the Church in three great Councils in that same century. All in vain. The demand for reform became more and more determined. Since the Church Councils had failed, Germany had for years hoped for a Diet, which unlike the Church Council, would

not be controlled by the pope. The German princes demanded that the laity be permitted to hear the dispute now in progress between Luther and the curia, that they examine for themselves the rightness of the decision of the Papal See, sitting in judgment upon Luther at the Diet. Therefore Frederick the Wise suggested to Charles V that Luther be permitted to appear at the Diet of Worms, that he be heard in his own defense by the secular estates of the Empire. Frederick's request was granted, though most unwillingly.

Luther's genius included the artistic gift of complete surrender to whatever demanded his devotion or participation. Passionate, intense, he was inwardly at one with it. Yet he was always loyal to himself and aware of the limits of his faculties and strength. The unflinching assurance, the genuineness and vigor of all his activity were derived from that exultant faith in the Invisible, which knows itself safe from all danger despite conspicuous evidence of visible and engulfing peril. Here lay the peace which he had sought in vain in the monastery. And in this confidence he prepared for his appointment in Worms.

The opposition to the papacy was so great in Germany that Aleander, the papal nuncio, felt his life endangered on his way to Worms. According to his report nine-tenths of the population cheered to the watchword "Luther," the other tenth cried "death to the curia." Charles V had succeeded in deceiving Luther's friends Hutten, Sickingen, and the young theologian Martin Bucer, who ineptly attempted mediation. Spalatin warned Luther by recalling the fate of John Hus. Luther, ready for martyrdom, but certain too of the martyr's victory, replied that though Hus was burned to ashes, no flames could consume truth. He turned a deaf ear to all warnings and promises, and continued on his way, a triumphal procession.

The papal party therefore had to resort to a quick, clever stratagem for the purpose of circumventing any effectiveness Luther's appearance might have. To this purpose Aleander and Charles agreed beforehand to eliminate any theological debate. Matters were to be dispatched in most formal and summary fashion. Luther entered the hall apparently at ease. But before this brilliant assemblage the peasant and monk became uneasy, embarrassed, awk-

ward. A natural shyness and awe before the mighty of the earth confused him, made him uncertain momentarily. There is no doubt that many a one was disappointed by his humble appearance, that many a one shrugged his shoulders and smiled in contempt at the simple, maladroit monk, whose demeanor made the excitement in Germany all the more incomprehensible.

Luther was, moreover, keenly disappointed on this first day before the Diet. He had expected to set forth his views publicly and to state his reasons for them in a formal colloquy. But Aleander had succeeded in limiting the debate to two questions put to him: did he or did he not recognize as his writings the books lying on the bench beside the lay interrogator — John of Eck, an official of the Archbishop of Trier, carefully instructed by Aleander. And, would he defend or recant these books and their contents. One word in answer would suffice: "yes" or "no." The titles of the books were read, many of them polemical, others included the exegesis of the Lord's Prayer and the Commentary on the Psalms. Having regained his confidence and self-possession, Luther admitted the writings to be his own. As to the second question, he requested time for consideration.

On the next day, April 8, 1521, the second question only was asked: would he defend all of his books or recant some of the content. Luther was well aware of his opponents' designs to entrap him. They had made smooth the way to escape. Everyone had counselled retraction in part. But Luther did not waver. In this decisive moment he trusted neither human wisdom nor help. His help was in God. Today, calm, firm, he gave a clear and confident answer in a well prepared Latin reply, an address epochal in the history of mankind. He divided the writings, whose author he was, into three groups: the one treated of faith; the other of papal tyranny; the third of the enemies of the Gospel. He could not retract the writings of the first group, for that would in fact signify that he condemned truth, recognized as such by friend and foe alike. The accusations set forth in the second group were corroborated by universal experience and complaint, especially in the German nation, whose conscience was held imprisoned by papal laws and human inventions; in his polemics he had not disputed in his own name, but in the name of Christ.

He admitted that not everything he had written was irreproachable. He confessed to having been more impetuous and vehement in his polemics than becomes the Christian communion and profession. He realized he could not defend the style of his writings, and it was possible he might have deviated from the truth in some of the content; he could err. However, he would retract none of it so long as he held it to be the truth, so long as he could not be proven to be in error. He adjured his opponents that they point out his fallacy, that they convict him by word of prophet and Gospel. Then would he be willing to recant, then would he be the first to deliver his books unto the flames. He knew all too well that dissension and tumult must follow his teaching, but thus was it willed by the Lord, who came not into the world to bring peace, but the sword.

He was asked to repeat his words in German. Again there was no wavering, no deviation, no compromise. Here was the clear witness of one man's conscience; the proclamation of salvation through faith alone. Mighty, prophetic were his words, gripping in the consciousness of the historical significance of this moment, uncompromising in the solemnity of the responsibility entrusted to him in this hour. There was the inspired awareness, surpassing all fear and all earthly thought, that he was standing, not only before this assemblage of the world's might and majesty, transitory in its greatness, but before the invisible communion of saints of future generations and centuries, and above all, that he was declaring his loyalty to "the Most High in heaven and on earth," and to His Word.

Since he was mere man and not God, he could establish the authority of his books in no other manner than had the Lord Christ, who, when Annas asked for proof of his teaching, replied: (John 18:23) "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil." And he reiterated that he could be convinced and conquered by witness of the Holy Scriptures alone, for he believed neither pope nor Church Councils alone. "Since my conscience is captive to the Word of God . . . I neither can nor will I recant anything, for it is insincere, precarious, and perilous to act contrary to conscience."⁵⁶

And with a prayer on his lips, beseeching forgiveness for all

injustice he might inflict, for any weakness that might be his, he sent his supplication to the Father Almighty, praying His absolving grace, fervent, but composed, humble and yet proud in the sublime certitude that he could do naught else but hold fast to that which he knew to be truth: "Here I stand, I can not do otherwise! May God help me, Amen!" One man's own conviction against centuries, against all Christendom!

Charles could follow but one course. On the morning following Luther's bold stand Charles V issued a declaration condemning all heresy in his lands. Safe conduct from Worms to Wittenberg had been promised Luther, and Charles did not intend to break his word as Emperor Sigismund had done in the case of John Hus a hundred years earlier. Though opinion at the Diet was divided, the Edict of Worms, whereby the heretic's life was pronounced forfeit, and his writings and preaching prohibited, was soon published. But no imperial edict would now stop the religious revolution. A large section of the people stood by Luther, many princes were his adherents, and the real power in Germany lay at this time in the hands of the princes. Moreover, Charles was absent from the scene for the next nine years and the decree was not executed.

The high unconcern of assured faith that was Luther's, his ethical courage, moved friend and foe alike. An opponent, the Venetian Marino Sanuto, wrote: "I notice how steadfast this man has become, and that he can not be dissuaded from his conviction either by rational argument, nor by fear, nor by entreaties."⁵⁷ Ulrich von Hutten had advised him: "Be on your guard and keep your eyes and mind on the enemies. You must know what a loss to humanity your fall would be. For, as far as you are concerned, I know your feeling that you would rather die [here and now] than live in any other way."⁵⁸ "Be manly and strong and do not waver. But why do I exhort you, when there is no need of it!"⁵⁸ Crotus Rubianus, witty humanist setting the fashion in the Latin *Letters of Obscure Men*, pleaded with him in a letter: "The whole world is alarmed by the fact that the threats of the tyrants do not frighten you in the least, that you are an intrepid scorner of death, that you are willing to take a thousand dangers upon yourself freely for the sake of Christ. To be sure, we approve this dispo-

sition and recognize it in the spirit of the Lord. However, we fear that the world is in danger because of your holy courage. . . . God would have us courageous, but not incautious; brave, but not rash; whoever neglects precaution on his own behalf seems to me to be tempting God. I fear that I am an inopportune admonisher; but I'm glad to assume this blame, which many share, because they feel that you are in grave danger because of your aforementioned eager readiness, which many interpret as carelessness."⁵⁹ Though he knew persecution and assassination not only possible, but probable in the face of his defiance of Empire and Papacy, Luther stood firm.

Under the ban of the Empire, excommunicated and condemned by the Pope as a heretic, Luther's life was not safe. In his battle for truth and freedom he was not alone, and he sometimes asked himself whether it was possible God had chosen the knights Hutten and Sickingen to help him and to shield him. Yet he realized that though their endeavors were seemingly directed toward the same end, he could not condone the spirit compelling them. Luther wished them well, but he could not fight beside them, for they had chosen the "lawless course." He wrote to Spalatin: "I am sending you Hutten's letter. You can see what he wants. I do not wish anyone to fight for the Gospel with force and homicide; and I have written him so. The world has been overcome and the Church preserved by the Word, and by the Word it will be reformed."⁶⁰ If Hutten ever believed he could influence Luther to his way, he soon recognized his mistake, as is clear from his letter to Luther: "The intentions of the two of us are distinct in this that mine is human; however you are more perfect and you already know yourself wholly dependent upon God."⁶¹ Though Roman cunning and imperial gold had been able to beguile Hutten and his friend Sickingen, the powerless monk of Wittenberg went fearlessly forward: "I do not want to have fought for the Gospel with violence and bloodshed."⁶²

A new epoch was being born. Whereas the Middle Ages had made religion a cosmic drama, Luther established it as a personal relation to Christ and to his dear Father in Heaven. Luther's convictions concerning man's relation to the Invisible were secured and founded on that which is inwardly experienced by man, and

they were drawn from the unfailing source of Christian revelation. The religious movement set afoot by him broke the power of the papacy, swept Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, England, Scotland into the stream of revolution, and gave a new direction to the spiritual history of mankind.

Translation of Bible Begun at the Wartburg

The enunciation of man's religious freedom secures Luther's greatness in the world of mind and spirit. His great literary achievement is the translation of the Bible into German. On his way back from Worms Luther had been spirited away to the safety of the Wartburg by order of Frederick the Wise. While in seclusion at this castle, he translated the New Testament, 1522; the entire Bible appeared in German in 1534. He has been called the "creator" of the Modern High German language. It may be said to have had its beginning in the Chancellery of Charles IV in Prague, where the Bavarian, Austrian, and Meissen dialects converged. During the fifteenth century this High (South) German was fused with the Saxon elements of Central Germany, and Luther built his Modern High German on the union of these elements he found in the Saxon Chancery. However, to this barren and stilted idiom he added the several dialects thus far used in literature and print, specifically by the German mysticists; in this manner he merged the slender treasures of North, South, and Middle German. Into it his genius breathed the breath of life.

The German version of the Bible, "the German interpretation," as he called it, is a remarkable achievement. He had to communicate that which the particular peculiarities of the original languages of the Bible express by means of the dissimilar distinctiveness of the German tongue. That which was conveyed by the characteristic Hebrew and Greek manner of thinking and speaking had to be transmitted faithfully to the German. According to modern philology Luther's German Bible is not free of inaccuracies. He knew that. It is the more extraordinary, however, that, though there are passages whose original concept he could not translate in sure and impeccable perfection, he yet introduced no incorrect thought.

Schooled in the stylistic art of Humanism, that distinguished

articulation of the wealth of concepts provided by Scholasticism, he added to this foundation the riches of his personal intuitive faculty and linguistic talent. From his vast scholarship and sensitivity sprang a language lucid, perspicuous, simple, euphonious, laden with mystery, fear, warmth, solace, and joy; conveying tenderness, delicacy, rapture, and impregnated with striking elemental force. The power of personal concentrated fullness is infixed in his style, cogent, forceful, regenerative. With singular literary and poetic talent he directed the vigorous naturalism of his century to the fount of a quickened and quickening life. Through the graphic imagery of his diction, through the vividness which his personal fantasy added to colloquial speech, he established the divine as real. The translation of the Bible into German makes this priest-prophet one of the great molders of language, a peer of the poet-prophet Dante, and of the artist-poet Goethe.

In this daring venture of affording his people direct access to the Bible in their own tongue, Luther gave to them the most enduring good he had found for himself — the way to freedom. With thankfulness in his heart, humbly he acknowledged that the one thing needful had been accomplished. "As for me, I should readily suffer that all [my books] perish, since I sought nothing other than that the Holy Scriptures and divine truth be revealed; they now, thank God, shine forth so brightly and mightily everywhere, that one could easily dispense with my books and their kind."⁶³ He gave his people a language, and a Bible.

And he gave them a catechism, in editions small and large, in 1520 and 1529. As a basis for instruction in Christian doctrine, his Small Catechism used the three Articles of Faith, in common use in the Church before the Reformation; he added to these the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the two sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, and The Office of Keys (concerning Absolution). In question and answer he set forth the meaning of Christian faith. This little booklet was to enlighten, to persuade. But "we are to force no one to believe . . ."⁶⁴ The Large Catechism hoped that through its exposition and interpretation of God's intention toward man, man might apprehend Him: "This however is the meaning of apprehending Him, that the heart seize Him and cleave to Him [hang on Him]. To cleave to Him with the heart

is nothing other than to depend upon Him entirely.”⁶⁵ Having found the proved blessing, a faith invincible, Luther added the choral to the list of his gifts: “Ein’ feste Burg ist unser Gott.”⁶⁶ This greatest of his hymns, to which he gave both text and music, reiterates the old Germanic thought: truth once recognized can not be destroyed, and greater than all earthly goods and riches is the loyalty to “The Mighty Fortress,” which is our God.

Hymn, Bible, and catechism were destined to dominate the religious life of the Protestant church, school, and home. They were destined to foster a new understanding of the world and human history, to strengthen character, to build a deepened and heightened life, and to provide an inexhaustible source of exaltation and comfort. Bible, choral, and catechism, now made the possession of everyone, wrought a unity and national consciousness no other force could have provided. They are the authority upon which every individual may stand. Through them he may determine whether or not he is “practicing Christ” (*ob er Christum treibe*). They proclaim and hold that all things created and willed by God are to be sanctified through faith and put into the service of building God’s kingdom on earth.

REVOLUTIONARY CONSEQUENCES OF LUTHER’S REFORM ACTIVITIES

After 1520, a mood of spiritual conflict prevailed. The Church of Rome, the Lutherists, and the followers of Zwingli entered the lists with a plethora of treatises, tracts, disputations, commentaries, sermons in German and Latin. Luther’s opinions spread by leaps and bounds, and enthusiastic communities put them into practice. This new analysis of piety involved the abandonment of many features of medieval Christianity, such as Indulgences, pilgrimages, the Mary cult, the celebration of the eucharist as practiced in the mass, the sacerdotalism of the priesthood, “the treasury of merits,” the doctrine of purgatory. Protestantism further rendered superfluous shrines and altars filled with reliques, images and icons of saints with candles before them, the holding of innumerable beliefs in magic among the laity, and the practice of monasticism. The concept of the invisible Church was increasingly emphasized, and the practices of the visible Church came to be recognized as and associated with human institutions.

Monks and nuns renounced their vows and returned to normal life. Luther in 1525 set an example by wedding Katharine von Bora, a former nun. Ecclesiastical property reverted to the state, that is, enriched princes and cities. Together with the abandonment of many other familiar features of medieval Christianity, the church service assumed gradually the simpler form of song, prayer, and sermon, and the German language was substituted for Latin. Throughout this transition from the old to the new it was Luther's constant solicitude not to offend "tender consciences." He was tirelessly active, battling for truth with the manifold powers of his spirit. He advocated a system of education supported by the state; he proposed schools for all and promulgated the teaching of history, mathematics, music, and the ancient languages in the higher schools.

This ferment of opinion naturally called forth extremists — agitators whose radical excesses, though within the reform movement, were in some instances a greater threat to the welfare of the Reformation than the Roman opponents. While Luther was still in retirement at the Wartburg, startling happenings were taking place in Wittenberg, the home of the Reformation. Radicals under the leadership of Thomas Münzer, calling themselves "prophets" or Anabaptists, and joined by Andreas Rudolf Bodenstein, called Carlstadt, one of Luther's colleagues at the University, were preaching iconoclasm and advocating other acts of violence. Münzer had been an early supporter of Luther. His position however soon diverged to extreme iconoclasm in theology and radicalism in political and social theories. He claimed divine illumination for his doctrines, and wherever he went he aroused the dissatisfied peasantry and the artisan of the town. He proclaimed that it was the will of God that the social structure be overthrown and a simple, godly society, with community of property, that is, a communistic theocracy, be established. Carlstadt's tracts set up paradox assertions concerning the bread and wine in the celebration of the mass; he advised the parents to let their children learn a trade rather than waste their time in school; and he advised the students to discontinue their studies and to cultivate the soil — in his own way he thus voiced an opinion in the sixteenth century to be held by a later Rousseau or Tolstoi; he vehemently denounced the idolatrous worship of images and paintings in the churches and

demanding that they be demolished. For these radicals it was a question as to whether the old institutions, the monasteries, the pilgrimages, the churches, the monastic orders, saints' days, images, paintings, carvings, and sculpture in the churches be continued and accepted until a new order should evolve, or whether they should be destroyed and thus removed at once. The zeal of the enthusiasts grew impatient, and they set about perpetrating iconoclasm and all kinds of demolition.

These "prophets" appearing in Wittenberg thought Luther's reform not thorough enough. He professed to rest all upon the Scriptures and yet they asserted he accepted infant baptism as the sacramental foundation of the Christian Church. According to Anabaptist belief child baptism does not fulfill the chief conditions of admission into a visible brotherhood of saints; they accepted faith, repentance, spiritual illumination and free surrender of self to Christ only. Luther, hearing of this nefarious propaganda, left the Wartburg at the risk of his life and appeared among his people in March, 1522. The interview with the "prophets" convinced him that they were "false prophets."

Finding the "Word" inadequate, the rebels were preparing to spread the Gospel not alone by the Word, but by force and violent deed. They believed themselves urged thereto by the spirit. But what kind of spirit is it, Luther asks, that demolishes churches and monasteries and images and rages impetuously and wantonly? The iconoclasts would eliminate Holy Scriptures, tempt God with their own works and dictate to Him time, place, and measure. Christ and his apostles demolished no churches, nor images. They won men's hearts by the Word of God, and idolatry soon ceased. The iconoclasts contended that the Jews were bidden to destroy all idols; but Luther reminds them, that the Jews had God's command, and this "we do not have." Or are we to offer up our children as burnt offering as did Abraham when God commanded him? Are we to kill the Canaanites and Amorites (Deut. 7:1)? In that case, he argues, there were indeed little need for anything beyond the spilling of blood. But not so.

His powerful word soon established order in Wittenberg and quieted the uprising. The famous Lenten Sermons of 1522 invited to peace and harmony. "Let us deport ourselves properly and pro-

ceed gently, and in fear and humility give heed to the divine Word, that one serve the other in all meekness, that we offer our hands, our help, and do good unto the other in all his distress, minister unto him in misfortune, anxiety, need, and calamity as unto ourselves.”⁶⁷

As to Carlstadt’s contentions concerning the meaning of the mass, Luther thought it well to preach, write, and proclaim that the mass, as celebrated in the Roman Church, did not accord with its institution by Christ. In his reply to the attack of Henry VIII upon him late in 1521, Luther summed up his position in respect to this question: “If you can convince me that [the institution of] the mass is not a promise and pledge of God given unto us, then you shall have won. Then I too shall say the mass is a sacrifice. However, God’s promise and pledge can not be our deed, can not be offered by us, but only received and believed.”⁶⁸ Furthermore, “despite all you may say, you will never be able to prove that the bread does not remain [bread]; although as I have said, it does not matter; let each adhere to whatever opinion he will, there is no danger to faith in it. . . . It suffices that no article of faith can be made out of it. . . . I can say of a piece of fiery iron, that is fire, and yet I can not deny the iron.”⁶⁹ “Even as iron is in the fire and fire in the iron, to speak naively, and the two interpenetrate and are as one and yet each retains its own nature, thus . . . bread and body are one thing . . . even as the Man Christ is God, and again, God is Man.”⁷⁰ And is not “the heart much more subtle than bread? You will fathom that . . . as little as you can say how it is possible that Christ dwell in so many thousand hearts. . . . As soon as Christ speaks, this is my body, so soon is His body present through the Word and power of the Holy Spirit.”⁷¹

Luther held that bread and the body, wine and the blood, are consubstantially present in the Lord’s Supper. Henry VIII and the Romans maintained in the doctrine of transubstantiation that Christ’s body and blood alone remains. In his inward experience and assurance Luther declared boldly: “I affirm the Gospel which clearly makes known that the mass is a pledge and work of God, wherein He promises and delineates His grace unto us. Here I stand, here I bid defiance, here I proudly boast: God’s Word is precious to me beyond all else, divine Majesty is my stay. There-

fore it is nothing to me even if a thousand Augustines, and in addition a thousand churches of Henry were against me."⁷² And he might have added, a thousand Carlstadts.

Having made clear his position in respect to the mass, Luther further separated himself from Carlstadt and Münzer by condemning their iconoclastic practices. He characterized the unrest and the insurgence provoked by them: "Satan is intent on exercising his machinations among us; since he discovers he can not paralyze us from the left, he falls upon us from the right. Formerly he made us altogether too papistical, and now he would make us altogether too Evangelical."⁷³ Formerly the Church had elevated itself above the Word, now the self-styled liberals, zealous in the will of God, were for their part again entangled in externalities.

In these troubled days it was Luther's way, as always, to commit all things to God and to trust in His word. "I opposed pope, Indulgences, and the Papists, but not by force, not by blasphemy, not with the breaking of images; however I practiced the Word of God, preached it and wrote it; other than that I did nothing at all."⁷⁴ Had he used force, what a sad train of consequences he would have set afoot, what bloodshed would have drenched Germany! It would have been a fool's game and perverseness and destruction in body and soul. "I continued in quietness and let the Word fulfill its purpose."⁷⁵ Churches may be adorned with paintings and images, God is praised in them, but they are not to be worshiped. However, who can look into man's heart? And who can know and say there has been such worship? Therefore Münzer and Carlstadt and their followers have grossly erred and been deceived when they engage in the transgression iconoclasm is.

There is another way of overthrowing idolatry. Ideas must be overcome with ideas, principles with principles. St. Paul, having examined the idols and images in Athens did not set upon them and demolish them, but he stepped into the public place and reproved the Athenians because of their superstitions and idolatrous cult. "Therefore preach against idolatry, but do not pull down an image by force."⁷⁶ For they ought to know that no exterior thing can harm faith. "There are people who worship the sun, the moon, and the stars; shall we therefore rush forward and pluck the stars from the heavens, and hurl the sun and the moon to earth? I sus-

pect we shall take good care not to attempt this . . .”⁷⁷ Gold, silver, money, goods give rise to much evil in the world, are we therefore to throw them away? Surely not. “Indeed, if we would cast out our nearest enemy, the most pernicious one of all, we should be obliged to cast out and annihilate ourselves. For we have no more dangerous enemy than our own heart.”⁷⁸ And he reiterated the words he had spoken and will speak to the end: “I do not wish to force nor to have forced anyone to faith.”⁷⁹

What can one do? What will he do? “*Summa summarum!* I shall preach it, proclaim it, publish it; but I shall compel, urge no one forcibly; for faith must be put on voluntarily, unconstrainedly.”⁸⁰ How blind were the iconoclasts who thought to storm the world and force men to their way of thinking and belief! Luther drew the last consequences of their delusion. No doubt Christ was wiser and more learned than the zealots; still, when He asked His disciples whose image was on the coin, and they answered, “Caesar’s,” he did not say, cast it from you, this pagan’s image, nor did he fear to sin in accepting it. “Therefore it is clear that not all images are forbidden. Were we to conform to the desire of all the zealots we should not be able to mint money nor to look into any water or mirror, and we should have to put away everything that produces an image; indeed, people would have to wrench out their eyes in order to see no image at all. . . . In sum, the first commandment requires an upright faith and confidence in God and no external thing is commanded in it.”⁸¹ Luther’s first commandment, it should be recalled, is brief, concise: “Thou shalt have no other Gods before me!” Still Münzer continued proclaiming his revolutionary doctrines in religion and politics with increased vehemence, and, as far as the lower orders of society were concerned, with growing success.

Not by Violence, but by the Word

Could one ever apply force on behalf of the Gospel? Luther’s answer was in the negative, based upon the ever recurring principle: “Not by violence, but by the Word!” He warned the princes and lords most insistently against arbitrary acts in spiritual and secular affairs and as earnestly warned the oppressed against all violence on their part. He was extraordinarily careful to restrain

all acts of passion that might eventuate in revolt. He was convinced the people have no right to use force; he was just as convinced that the rulers are in duty bound to protect the people against all tyranny with the power given them by God.

At one time he demanded, that if the unbearable conditions in the Church continue and the Church in Rome refused the plea "of all the world for a Council to abrogate these evils,"⁸² that the civil governments force the convocation of a reform Council with weapon in hand. Here Luther exhibited a remnant of the views of the Church he would reform; he would make the community implemental, he would use violence to force men to their salvation. But he corrected what in the surge of passion he had suggested, and added: "But God, who speaks Deut. 32:35, Rom. 12:19: 'Revenge is mine,' will at the right time find these His enemies."⁸² And "Let everyone see to it that he does not forget his love for his enemies and pray for those who persecute and revile him, and desire no avenger, as Christ teaches, Matt. 17."⁸³ For mankind had already been too much punished, and it was time that man's misery be brought before God, that He might avert His punishment and judgment from all. "Not by force" can the papacy be overcome, only "by the light of truth." "If you are a Christian then you know very well . . . what you must do for them before God . . . pray for them in love."⁸⁴ Pray that God's wrath be turned from them. Again and again he demanded "faith and love . . . in them resides the alone power."⁸⁵

In 1522 he wrote his *Sincere Admonition to all Christians to Guard against Revolt*: "It never brings the improvement which one desires to gain thereby. Revolt is devoid of reason and generally brings disaster to the innocent rather than to the guilty. Therefore no revolt is righteous, no matter how just the cause, for the issue is always more havoc than improvement. For that purpose the government is invested with the power of the sword, to punish the wicked and to protect the pious . . . as St. Paul says Rom 12:4 and I Peter 2:13, 14. . . I shall always side with and support those, who suffer rebellion, however just the cause, and I shall oppose those, who instigate rebellion, no matter how just the cause: for this reason that a revolt can never take place without great damage and the shedding of innocent blood. . . . Those who teach and

understand my doctrine rightly, will not incite to revolt; they have not learned it from me.”⁸⁶ But there was no reason to fear it, because “he who accepts God’s Word will not begin a revolt; and he, who does, abuses God’s Word wantonly.”⁸⁷ It is the purpose of worldly government to settle disputes in an orderly way, by way of books of law, of which there are many. The employment of orderly and lawful means for redress does not constitute revolt. And more than that, the use of force will not deter the enemy but rather strengthen him in any case. “One can do more than enough with words and letters, so that neither blows nor stabbing are necessary.”⁸⁸ Thousands were eager to throw off by force the tyranny of bishops busy with worldly affairs and oblivious to their spiritual office. Luther’s word might bring release or continued oppression, but his principle stood unshaken, “alone by means of the Word.”

In a tract called *Against the erroneously called Spiritual Estate of Pope and Bishops*, 1522, he asserted that those who assisted in destroying the bishoprics and the rule of the bishops were dear children of God. “This destruction, however, and this annihilation is in no manner to be understood to mean, that one should use one’s fist or the sword . . . entirely without raising a finger shall the antichrist be destroyed. Rather let everyone teach against [Rome], speak and persevere against it, until it be confounded, forsaken, of itself, scorned, and come to naught. That is a Christian [manner of] destruction.”⁸⁹ He who would seek righteousness by his own works was to Luther an antichrist in that he denied Christ and made himself God. Such a one wrongfully ascribed to his efforts the omnipotent capability of overcoming sin, death, devil, and the wrath of God, and could readily become an idolater of himself. This was the “rule of Satan” which must be annihilated in the Roman Church.

“If you however ask: What are we to do if the government does not take the initiative? Are we to endure still longer and confirm the wickedness of our lords? Answer: No, you shall do neither. Three things shall you do. The first: You shall confess your sins . . . whatever papacy has done to our goods, body, and soul, is brought about by our guilt. Therefore you must first confess your sins and put them away, before you may be rid of

the punishment. . . . Second: you must humbly entreat God against [the iniquity of] the papal rule; as does the tenth Psalm. . . . Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up thine hand. . . . Third: let your lips be the mouthpiece of the spirit of Christ . . . 2. Thess. 2:8: Our Lord Jesus will consume [the wicked] with the spirit of his mouth. . . . He must be consumed with words. . . . We shall not hinder him by means of force, but rather strengthen him. . . . By the light of truth, by encounter with Christ and His teaching is he undone, without effort or pains. . . . I and everyone who speaks the Word of Christ may boast that his is the mouth of Christ. My word is not mine, but Christ's, . . . whose words it speaks."⁹⁰ This was Luther's way of opposing the Evil One, which he held more effective than a hundred revolts. For the wickedness astir in the world is not that of any one man. "The devil has long feared these years. . . . He would like to incite to physical revolt so that the spiritual revolt might perish and be hindered. It will avail him nothing. Without raising a hand, alone by word of mouth, must he be destroyed; there is no other way."⁹¹

However, insurrection aroused by a mixture of religious and social revolutionary ideas was in progress in Germany. Groups and individuals sent out pamphlets, polemics, popular woodcuts, caricature, satire, fomenting rebellion against ecclesiastical prelates and clericals, against monopolies and industrialists, against all authority responsible for presumed or real economic and social injustices. Each group was intent on its own advantages and in fancy constructed its own Utopia. The peasant vociferated against worldly luxury, the traffic in Indulgences, the financial system of the Church. Leaflets and tracts urged him to resist his oppressor, if necessary, with hoe and flail. With the collapse of hierarchical authority, ecclesiastical jurisdiction no longer sat in judgment and could no longer exact punishment. The old social structure appeared prostrate and in utter chaos. The bounds of the diocese were no longer definitely demarcated, the income of the parish was seriously curtailed with the suspension of fees for the celebration of the mass, sale of Indulgences, and pious bequests. In the midst of this confusion one fact stood out in the mind of the ordinary man: the old Church was being attacked openly and it was time to shake off the yoke of hated priestly authority.

Concurrently with this smoldering insurgence the adherents of

the Roman Church were preparing to impede the rapid dissemination of Lutherist teachings. The cousin of Frederick the Wise, Duke George of Saxony, whose domain lay just beyond the border of Frederick's electorate, consigned Luther's writings and his translation of the Bible to the flames. In the Hapsburg countries, in the Netherlands, the first Evangelical martyrs were burned at the stake in 1523, and these were followed by others in Austria, Bavaria, and the Tyrol. By 1525 the loyalty of the princes was clearly defined: the Roman Catholic group was determined to exterminate the new Gospel, the Evangelicals were equally determined upon its perpetuation. And when the "heretics" [the Evangelicals] were persecuted for their belief, the restlessness among the lower classes grew, for it was apparent that the regeneration of the Church, so long hoped for, would not offer simultaneous improvement in political and social conditions. If the religious reformation was gaining its end in its own area, why should not the discontented ones resort to force on their own behalf?

The Peasants' War — 1524-1525

This disturbed state of affairs continued into the middle twenties. The revolutionary mood spurred on by Luther's call to spiritual freedom fabricated a primitive ideology out of his doctrine of the freedom of the Christian and encouraged social revolt. If the Church could be successfully reformed, why not society, the state, no less cankered than the Church? If on the basis of Scriptures every believer, also the peasant, had the right to his own convictions in belief, why not also in worldly affairs? And was not the Roman Church, depriving peasant and townsman alike of the Bible, the enemy? The storm broke in South Germany. The Peasants' War, 1524-1525, was the cumulative continuation of the unrest which had periodically shaken the German lands for almost a century. As recently as 1491, 1492, 1502, the peasantry had striven to cast off the tyranny of lay and ecclesiastical princes. It was a political-social, not a religious movement. It was the attempt of disappointed and embittered masses — peasants and townsmen — to convert and divert the reformation of the Church and religion into a revolution concerned with social and political conditions.

This revolt would hardly have taken place, had not the religious

enthusiasts in addition to their iconoclasm and their agitation to insurrection in the Church spurred peasant and townsman to slaughter of the ungodly and to the erection of the Kingdom of Christ. In Luther's Saxony serfdom had long been abolished and the peasants were well enough off. The grievances and the demands of the peasants varied with the locality. But they all wanted to maintain at least their present position, they objected to any abridgment of their rights or encroachment upon them. Their condition was not necessarily a wretched one. But as a class, they were self-confident, even defiant, and belligerent. And this characteristic rather than dire poverty drove the peasant to fight so repeatedly for the alleviation of his economic burdens.

The fifteenth century had imposed serfdom upon the peasant in some states, but he still held some traditional rights; he could not be bought or sold. It was the seventeenth century that deprived him of all rights and privileges associated with human dignity and independence. Under the influence of the Roman law, however, steadily gaining ground in Germany with the revival of classical antiquity, they saw their surviving rights vanish. They did not want to pay new taxes, they refused to accept the judgment of learned judges, and objected to the introduction of the Roman law. They insisted on retaining their own village autonomy with the right of choosing their own courts and justices. Every form of vassalage was condemned as unchristian. They resented the taxes for the monasteries, the secular rule of the ecclesiastical princes and priests, and they chafed under the tithe. The memories of former liberties lingered and this, together with the incentive of Luther's proclaimed freedom, goaded them on.

The peasants of Swabia and Franconia, stirred by the religious excitement which filled the air, influenced by the incendiary preaching of their prophets Carlstadt and Münzer, rose in revolt against nobles and priests — against all in authority. Confident that they had an ally in Luther, they were ready to strike down the land-owning nobles and abbots who tyrannized over them. In 1524 they rose, first near the border of Switzerland, then the revolt took its course from Alsace to the Main, to Thuringia, Saxony, and to the Alps.

The battle raged in its fiercest fury in Franconia, where the radi-

cal element in the towns was aroused and where the movement found talented political leadership. There were among them a few noblemen, as the undaunted knight Götz von Berlichingen, known as Götz of the Iron Hand, a soldier of long and varied experience, who participated for a short time only and then not altogether voluntarily; there was further the lonely individualist, Florian Geyer, who renounced his knightly privileges and interests and served the cause from motives purely idealistic. There were those who hoped to establish a Christian democratic peasant republic. But this meant little to the masses. They only knew that they could now unleash the long pent-up, wrathful indignation against the same Church which had for centuries been their stay and comfort.

All kinds of lawless elements crowded to the standards of the disorderly bands with no specific program and no united leadership. Thomas Münzer, the chief of the rebels, preached the deliverance of Israel in Thuringia. He proclaimed that the poetic Christ of Luther—the Christ of love and mercy—had served his time; that the true Christ had come, who desired that the weeds be plucked from the fields. He exhorted: "Let not the blood get cold on the blades of your swords!"⁹² But even in Thuringia the violence of the Peasants' War was not so bestial and gruesome as has sometimes been depicted, nor did the deeds correspond to the murderous words of its leader. Münzer was in fact the preacher of a mysticism of the cross which had little to do with social revolt. But he was engaged in a war against all constituted authority in an attempt to establish by force an ideal Christian commonwealth with civic justice and equity and community of goods for all. The enthusiast may often be the most vehement of agitators because his ideals, his pathos, and his rhetoric are so world-removed. Münzer collapsed when at Frankenhäusen his defeat proved his prophecies false. The revenge, in keeping with the manner of the age, was exceedingly brutal. The uprising effected no change in the peasant's condition. The lords did not dare increase their demands upon him, his lot was not improved, not worsened. His hope of achieving political equality with the other social estates was shattered.

But a large proportion of the nobility also lost eminence and authority. Feudalism was coming to an end. The castles were

destroyed, and there was but one course open to the dispossessed nobleman, to move to town. The Empire, charged with protection and the maintenance of law and order, had failed. Charles V was in Spain, hardly aware of the insignificant uprising. The imperial princes of the larger territories had to assume the responsibility. And the future of the new Church was bound to them.

Had Luther even temporarily supported the uprising, his cause would have been lost. He did not hesitate with his condemnation of the rebellion. Not from a political instinct to save his Church, but exclusively and wholly from religious conviction. He saw Satan at work in the revolt in the intermingling of the secular and temporal with the eternal and spiritual, misleading the insurgent with crafty delusions.

The princes however recognized what a support the Lutherist teaching could be to them; it taught that the subject may resist the governmental authority only in spiritual matters, but not in open revolt. Most assuredly it is incorrect to say that Luther's Reformation lost its character as a movement of the people with the Peasants' War. Precisely the opposite is true. To be sure the hope of a politically united nation and nationalism was not fulfilled. And whoever believed the freedom of a Christian man to be any other than a religious freedom, or whoever had accepted the new faith in the hope of gaining earthly advantages, as many had, was doomed to puzzled wonderment and disappointment in the reformer. Many turned to the Anabaptists who promised not only the invisible but also the external and visible community of saints. Luther however continued loyal to his task to build the invisible, spiritual kingdom of God.

Luther and the Peasants' War

In the early months of the uprising a moderate section of the peasants put forward a reasonable program called the *Twelve Articles*, which formulated their practicable demands. They asked that certain vexatious personal services due to the lord and his family be abolished, and that meadows, woods, and streams, once belonging to the villagers in common, be restored to them. Certain taxes were to be abolished. And they demanded free choice of their own pastors. Fortified with these Articles they appealed to Luther,

promising to be guided by the Word of God. Luther's answers appeared in three treatises: *Admonition to Peace*, *To Princes and Lords*, and *To the Peasants*. Sternly, severely he called the princes to repentance and reform. Friendly, pastoral, hearty were his admonitory words to the peasants, his "dear Brethren," "dear friends,"⁹³ to abstain from murder and robbery. He admitted he was most pleased that the peasants in their twelfth Article "offer to accept better counsel gladly and willingly . . . and are ready to be instructed in so far as that can be done by means of a clear, evident, indisputable text in the Bible."⁹⁴ The princes were cautioned to reconciliation, kindness, reminded of their limited power and duty. "The government may not control what each is to teach or to believe, be it the Gospel or false lies; it is sufficient that it teach prevention of rebellion and discord . . ."⁹⁵ To the peasants he wrote: "Thus your Lord Christ, whose name you bear, speaks Matt. 5:39: Resist not evil; whosoever shall compel you to go a mile, go with him twain; and whoever shall take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also, and whoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. . . . You will not suffer that one treat you maliciously and unjustly. Christ commands that you resist not evil nor injustice, but yield always, suffer, and let them despoil you. . . . Indeed our Lord Jesus Christ says Matt. 5:44 that we are to bless them that curse us, pray for our persecutors, love our enemies, do good to them that despitefully use us. These are our Christian rights, dear friends. . . . Christians do not fight on their own behalf with swords, nor with muskets; but with the cross and suffering; even as Christ does not wield a sword, but hangs on the cross."⁹⁶ At all times Luther urged that earthly suffering and burdens be borne in patience. Christ is the Saviour, not the inciter to covetousness of human liberty and power.

He saw but one path open to the peasant: "If you were Christians, you would refrain from using your arm and sword, defiance and threat, and you would adhere rather to the Lord's Prayer and further your cause before God in prayer, and say (Matt. 6:10): Thy will be done; and again v. 13; deliver us from evil. . . . That is the true Christian manner of delivery from misfortune and evil, namely to endure and to call upon God. . . ."⁹⁷ And since they did neither, they set themselves up as their own God and Saviour,

and for the sake of the Gospel they became robbers, thieves, and assassins. What kind of Christians are these?

Luther turned to the government, whose duty it is "first of all to submit the cause to God and confess that we have well deserved [the revolt]; to consider that perhaps God is thus inciting the devil to a general punishment of Germany."⁹⁸ For it was his firm belief, uttered as early as 1520: "The beginning of all sin is to withdraw from God and not to trust Him."⁹⁹ And both sides were guilty of lack of trust in God, both sides were depending upon the strength of their own might. "Because, dear Sirs, there is nothing Christian on either side; it is not a question of a Christian cause between you, but both, lords and peasants, are concerned with heathenish or worldly justice and injustice, and temporal goods; and in addition both sides are acting against God and are subject to His wrath, as you have heard: give heed therefore and take advice, set about the matter as such matters should be handled, that is, justly and not with violence and strife."¹⁰⁰ In no uncertain terms he told the government and the peasants that both were wrong, that it would do them no good to resist Christ; that two wrongs do not make a right. And further: "I know of a truth that both of you are under the judgment of God. . . . However I pray Him that He establish concord among you and reconciliation; or mercifully hinder that the conclusion be to your mind. . . . Would to God, that you feared His wrath and repented. . . . I have advised you in all Christian and brotherly devotion . . ."¹⁰¹

But Luther's appeals were of no avail. Passion and violence overrode faith and reason, and night after night glaring flames against the sky proclaimed ruined castles and sacked abbeys. The insurgents invaded the hated castles and monasteries, burned them and slew their occupants. When their brutalities and excesses became wholly intractable, the leaders were forced to turn to the princes to restore order. Since because of Charles' absence from Germany the central government was incapable of action, the territorial princes united and scattered the peasants' disorganized bands. Often they stooped to hideous massacre of the luckless fugitives. Tens of thousands of lives had been sacrificed, a large part of South Germany devastated, hundreds of religious houses and churches burned and razed, and treasures of painting, sculpture, stained glass, and

engravings destroyed. A great reproach was cast upon the reformers, whose teachings were erroneously held by their enemies to be the sole cause of the ferment. Certainly there was great confusion as to the issue involved, greater confusion still as to the meaning of Luther's teaching in respect to secular affairs.

After successful repression of the revolt, to quote but one example, Luther's friend, Philip of Hesse, wrote to Duke George of Saxony, Luther's enemy: "That you, my dear prince, also write, that the revolt was caused by Lutherists, can not at all be proved. Thus [in doing battle with the insurgents] I dealt death to no Lutheran, but to rebellious people, who did not hold to Luther's doctrine. The Gospel, as our Luther's teaching is now called, does not lead to a peasants' revolt, but to all peace and obedience. Thus also in the regions, whose people adhere to the Gospel, which is called Lutherist, less revolt broke out and in some localities none at all, than in those, which persecute the Gospel."¹⁰² Furthermore, so little did Pope Clement VII know about real conditions in Germany, that he praised Landgrave Philip for fighting the peasants — "on behalf of the papal cause." Philip himself "had slain the peasants," because he considered them "the worst enemies of the Gospel."

In the exegesis of the Epistle of St. Peter, 1523, Luther had shown that acts of violence are not the result of the freedom he preached, but are the exact opposite of "Christian freedom": "Whoever would boast of freedom, let him first of all do what a Christian should do, namely, serve his neighbor . . . that all our works proceed from joy and love and are directed toward the benefit of the neighbor."¹⁰³ In 1534 he preached a sermon on the text based on John 6:1-15, the miracle of the two fishes and the five loaves of bread. That God provides daily for all is proved by trees, tilled fields, meadows, waters, which bear apples, pears, grain, barley, grass, fish, and whatever we need to sustain life. God provides so abundantly, "that we may believe that He will support us. . . . Even in poverty we are not to fear but to await His bounty. If anyone ever dies of hunger, it is because of unbelief. All the world would have to starve before he who has faith could thus die. We are not to despair or worry in respect to our daily bread nor in respect to any gifts of God, be they of body or of soul."¹⁰⁴ And

in this matter too the peasants misunderstood his interpretation of "Christian freedom." True freedom, a true waiting upon God, a true knowing that "He openeth His hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing," that "He careth," would, as Luther understood it, have brought answer to satisfy all needs, even to the peasants.

According to Luther the secular government alone had the right to introduce innovations. He had opposed the Iconoclasts because of the outrages they committed, as he at all times opposed any violence in the struggle against the papacy. To Luther revolutionary chaos could never be a solution. In 1523 as well as in 1524 he wrote against Münzer, because "this tree bears no fruit, except to incite to murder, uprising, and bloodshed!"¹⁰⁵ He had made his views clear to the Elector, "They are not Christians, who beyond the use of the Word would embark on an undertaking with blows of the fist, and are not rather willing to suffer all."¹⁰⁶ Only in respect to one of their goals, freedom for Evangelical preaching, could the insurgents appeal to Luther; not in respect to the methods they employed. Luther, one of the people himself, knew their mood. Therefore he was indefatigable in exhorting the subjects to obedience; therefore he adjured the lords just as indefatigably to remedy the palpable abuses and injustices in order that the smoldering disaffection be eradicated. By his insistent importuning he hoped to avert the catastrophe.

The determination of the Roman Church to root out the new doctrine by force had naturally exasperated the peasants already provoked by their social debasement. Because of the repressive measures employed by the Church, Luther's expostulations could not reach the insurgents. Therefore those no longer willing to submit in blind obedience to the Roman priests and to the feudal lords fell into the hands of the "zealots" and their leadership.

As the rebellion progressed unhindered and became more brutal and excessive, Luther composed another treatise, *Against the Murderous and Thievish Hordes, the Peasants*, 1525. In it he advised the civil government to offer "kindly reconciliation" again, and if this failed, to use the sword. But he judged the peasants severely since the peasants were guilty of disloyalty, perjury, rebellion, blasphemy, robbery, and murder, which even a pagan government

punishes, and indeed, is in duty bound to punish. But a government, which is Christian and claims to be guided by the Word of God, must act in the fear of God. Let the ruler try goodness and kindness in every way possible, before he engages in battle.¹⁰⁷ "Unfortunately there are too many who treat the people brutally and therewith act unthankfully toward God, as if wilfully to arouse God's anger and awaken displeasure of the people . . . and thus instigate a new and worse rebellion."¹⁰⁸ He explains his position: "In the first pamphlet I could not sit in judgment on the peasants, because they volunteered to do justly and to accept better counsel; as Christ commands, one must not judge. . . . But before I was aware of it, they continued to strike down with blows, forgetting their pledge; they rob and rage and act like mad dogs. . . . Therefore I must write about them in a different tone: first to hold before them their sins . . . that some might repent; and then to instruct the secular government's conscience as to what course it is to follow,"¹⁰⁹ since it now has to do with open rebellion.

When Luther was then attacked because of his severe attitude toward the peasants, he issued his *Open Letter Concerning the Harsh Booklet against the Peasants*, 1525. And here he speaks with the furiousness of the Old Testament, with a terrifying relentlessness and severity: "Let no one show mercy to the defiant, impenitent, blinded peasants, who will not be counselled; but whoever can, and as he can, lash, stab, slay, and strike down as among mad dogs. And all of that in order that mercy be shown to them, who have perished at the hands of the peasants, been put to flight and seduced; that there be peace and security."¹¹⁰ It was here a matter of open rebellion against a God-ordained institution, the government. Insurrection constituted abuse of this authority. "My booklet . . . was written against insurgents; you must distinguish decisively between a rebel and an assassin or robber or any other criminal. An assassin or a criminal does not attack the head and government, but attacks only its members or goods; indeed, he fears the government. . . . But a rebel attacks the head itself, attacks its power and office, so that the assassin's crime is not to be compared with that of the rebel."¹¹¹ As long as there was hope of allaying the peasants' agitation and restraining them, Luther exhorted to peace; as soon as they destroyed this hope by committing

every kind of outrage, he felt he had to demand rigorous measures against them.

In the interval between the first and second tracts, he had "dared life and limb"¹¹² by traveling into the inflamed areas, as far as Nordhausen and Weimar, to preach, to pacify. But he discovered that the more he admonished the Thuringian peasants, the more headstrong, the more arrogant, the more furious they became. Dejected because of his failure to achieve cessation or some kind of adjustment in this frightful revolt, he wrote on May 4, 1525: "So let it be then! If I return home, I shall prepare for death with God's help, and await my new masters, assassins and robbers. . . . But before I approve and justify what they are doing, I should rather lose my life a hundred times."¹¹³ Having seen the horrors committed by them, he could no longer speak mildly as in the first tract, but was forced to the sharp words of the second. The infamy, the gruesomeness of the insurrection, left him, he knew, no choice.

As a servant of God and an ordained minister of His Word, Luther had to rebuke sin. The Christian must love and serve his fellow man, but he must love and serve God above all things. Collaboration with Satan's wiles and deceits had to be rebuked. "I must love my enemy and do good unto him; but I must be hostile to the enemy of God [above all to Satan], so that I may not run counter to God."¹¹⁴ Furthermore, whereas the kingdom of Christ demands that we suffer every manner of injustice, that we forgive and requite evil with good, the secular government "may not condone injustice, evil must be hindered and punished, justice must be protected and maintained."¹¹⁵ "Let [the civil government] whose office it is to punish evil and to reprimand take action in this matter; but outside this office let each observe the tenet, that he neither blame nor curse, but wish and render all kindness [to the enemy] even though he is iniquitous . . . [the latter] has not attacked you, but the sovereign God, and he has therewith incurred His wrath. . . . Of what avail is your trifling malediction and vengeance in the presence of such grave judgment; you should rather commiserate his wretchedness, pray for him that he might prevail and mend his ways."¹¹⁶

It is the duty of the government to curb lawlessness; to it is

accorded the authority of the sword. The peasants' cause was unjust insofar as they murdered; the power of the sword had not been commanded them. "They have committed three sins against God and man. . . . First, they have sworn loyalty and homage to the government . . . and they have wilfully and blasphemously broken obedience to it. . . . Secondly, they incite to rebellion, even like public robbers and assassins, they rob and plunder monasteries and castles sacrilegiously, which are not theirs. . . . Every person is both supreme judge and executioner of an openly rebellious man. Even as when a fire breaks out, he, who can extinguish it most quickly, is the best. For insurgence is not a malicious murder, nor like a great fire, which ignites a land and devastates it; insurgence brings with it murder, bloodshed, makes widows and orphans, and destroys everything and is the greatest disaster. Therefore in this case one shall set upon, slay and stab, secretly and openly, whoever can, and bethink himself that there can be nothing more venomous, injurious, more diabolical than an insurgent. Even as one must slay a mad dog; if you do not strike, you will be struck, and a whole country with you. Thirdly, under the cloak of the Gospel they commit their horrible, gruesome outrage, call themselves Christian brethren . . . and force the people to assist in such abomination. Therewith they make themselves the most iniquitous blasphemers and revilers of His Holy Name and thus do honor to and serve the devil. . . . Behold how mighty a prince the devil is, how he controls the world . . . how so quickly he can ensnare, seduce, delude, harden [the peasants'] hearts, rouse them to revolt, do with them, whatever his mad fury designs."¹¹⁷ Alas, Alas! how the false prophets deceived the people and destroyed their souls. Let peace reign and reconciliation, that devastation and sin may come to an end. The civil government must establish peace in the land, God has entrusted to it "the power of the sword." But it must show mercy toward the people.

Luther issued this tract, when the outcome was still uncertain, when blood and smoke obscured all else and it appeared that Germany would be left a wasteland of rubble and ruin. In conclusion he added, "If anyone thinks this too severe, let him reflect, how unbearable rebellion is, and that the world's destruction may be expected every moment."¹¹⁸ After Thomas Münzer's capture and

the first decisive victory, Luther pleaded: "Two things I request of the lords and the government. The first, if they win and prevail, that they refrain from presumption by all means, that they rather fear God before whom they are most culpable. . . . The other, that they be merciful to the prisoners and to those who surrender, as God is merciful to everyone who surrenders and humbles himself before Him. . . ." ¹¹⁹ On July 21, 1525, he interceded with the Elector of Mainz, to deal compassionately and mercifully with the wretched people. Also: "I have written the government, which is Christian and wants to do the right thing, . . . that, when they have won, they show mercy, not only to the innocent [as they have been doing], but also to the guilty." ¹²⁰

He used hard words to chastise those who in their victory knew no mercy. Nowhere in his works did Luther demand unconditional obedience to man, or to secular authorities. He knew man's shortcomings all too well, and a governing body is not exempt from these. Satirically he spoke of his enemies, and these included prince and peasant: "I notice how wonderfully they have grasped and learned the Gospel. Indeed, there isn't a spark of it in them, however much they prate about it. For how should they fathom what heavenly justice is in the Christ of the Gospel, when they do not even know what, according to law, earthly justice is in worldly government." ¹²¹

The service the peasants had to render the lord of the manor signified in extreme cases "fifteen days with horses and twelve days of manual labor each year." Luther offered this counsel to the lord of the manor at Einsiedel who requested his advice: "If you wanted to, you could and might remit some services to the poor and incapable among your subjects . . . you must take pains, not to impose new services, and in other things show them an honest goodwill. . . . It would not be desirable that the 'jus'," that is, the law requiring these services, be dropped and dispensed with, for as the lord is in duty bound to protect them unto peace and prosperity, so it is the subject's duty to render services in turn." ¹²² At the end of the War he insisted that the authorities be reasonable. "Sheer force can not endure and keeps the subjects in eternal hate toward the authorities; this all history avouches!" ¹²³ "It is the office of the government, that it be the father, that it be beneficent to all and show kindness." ¹²⁴

Thus he could say, "I told you both that you are in the wrong."¹²⁵ First of all, in the hope that peace might be maintained he warned the authorities in cutting words, but not in such a manner as to curry favor with the peasants. And when the peasants were determined to gain their ends by means of force, he turned incisive words against them, but not in such manner as to show partiality to the princes. With unusual trenchancy he upbraided the princes because of their cruelty toward the vanquished. In the end he, who once enjoyed the goodwill of high and low alike, stood alone, forsaken. But: "It is enough that my conscience is secure in the sight of God."¹²⁶ For, be it war or revolt, he had always ruled out the attack. "One must let the Christian article, which is called forgiveness of sin, hold sway. . . . For peace is more important than justice; indeed, laws are made for the sake of peace."¹²⁷

The peasant appealed to the revolutionary doctrine proclaimed by Luther, the "freedom of the Christian man." But he mistook, misconstrued, and misapplied that with which Luther was primarily concerned, man's inner freedom. In the beginning Luther upheld the peasant in his contentions, for he himself was born of lowly parents. He had declared the shoemaker, the smith, the peasant, each born to perform his task in his particular sphere, and he had made plain that each human being is a priest and bishop, whatever his station in life; he had asserted that each blow of the threshers' flail is as acceptable to God as a Carthusian monk's psalm.

His desertion of the peasant in the end subjected him to much criticism. One can not palliate the cruel causticity of such words as those he used in his advice to the princes, "to smite, stab and slay,"¹¹⁰ nor condone it; but he had declared over and over that he could not permit his cause to be compromised by political entanglements, no matter what their nature. He could not call good the unfettered lawlessness and brute force to which the revolt led. Only reluctantly had he turned his back upon the peasant. Luther poses the question: "What shall we do when the authorities continue to oppress us?" His answer is: "That the rulers are bad and unjust, is no excuse for rioting and insurrection . . ."¹²⁸ He excited such violent fury among lords and peasants that his friends persuaded him to write his critically ill father on February 15, 1530,

thus five years later, that he had been urged not to venture outside the protective walls of Wittenberg, since his life would be endangered.¹²⁹ But in all this fierce turbulence he knew the arch-enemy to be the fiend from hell, who can be attacked and overcome through prayer alone. Luther had to press for the maintenance of peace, he had to persuade that Christ's spirit prevail, he had to rebuke violence and revolt regardless of the outcome.

Secure in the Word of God, Luther chose the only right way. His decision recognized "order" as established by God, and "chaos" as the realm of Satan, and he refused to compromise or to make a pact with Evil. Neither the loss of the princes' favor nor of the support of public opinion could deter him from his course, which was dictated by the precept: eschew evil, and choose the good, the good found in the realm of God's Holy Spirit alone.

When Charles V, protector of the faith, was determined in the summer and fall of 1538 to strike a decisive blow against the enemy of Christendom, the infidel Turks, Luther advised against it. For: "It is my heart's desire and plea, that one keep peace and not start wars, nor be the cause of war. For I want to keep my conscience unburdened, and I do not wish to bear the reputation before either God or the world, that because of my counsel or will anyone should make war, or that anyone defend himself except those who have been so commanded and have a right thereto, Romans 13."¹³⁰ And, "I attest here also, that I do not wish to excite or provoke anyone to war, or insurrection, or defense, only alone to peace."¹³¹ The war was not undertaken. But it was Luther's duty as a theologian to admonish everyone that he fulfill his duty and whatever is commanded him diligently and in faith.

At all times Luther defended the tenet that the subject may not obey the government if it demands the subject's aid in the execution of any incontestable wrongdoing. "If they [the princes] are certain, that he [the Emperor] is in the wrong . . . they shall not obey him, nor submit nor assist him in his misdeeds."¹³² And if the Emperor should demand his subject's assistance in a religious war, "let no one obey."¹³³ And finally, "This above all I wish to have said, whoever begins a war, he is reprehensible,"¹³⁴ and it is only fair that he who first flashes a knife, be punished. For worldly government is instituted of God that it maintain peace and not

break it, that it restrain and hinder all wars and warfare. In the *Sermon against the Turks* in 1542 he gave much the same advice to the possible prisoners of war; he entreated them to endure the hardships in all humility and not to attempt self-liberation.

Evangelicals and Sects

The problem of dealing with the Evangelicals and the sects, particularly with the zealots and Anabaptists, minority groups, occasioned much strife and bloodshed. There was actually no sharp distinction between Anabaptists, spiritualists, "heavenly prophets," for these enthusiasts intermingled continually. Here and there throughout Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands there were zealous propagandists. After the failure of Münzer and Carlstadt a second attempt to establish a theocracy was made at Münster in Westphalia 1532-1535. Bockholdt, known as John of Leiden, proclaimed himself the successor of King David and assumed royal and absolute power in the new "Zion." By the authority of visions from heaven he sought to justify the most arbitrary and extravagant measures. With this assumed sanction he legalized polygamy, and himself took four wives. In a fit of frenzy he beheaded one of them with his own hand in the market place. Such license made Münster the scene of unbridled profligacy. After the town was besieged and taken in June, 1535, Bockholdt was executed after cruel torture.

The excesses of John of Leiden cast an unjust stigma on the Anabaptists, who on the whole were quiet, humble people who wished to follow in the footsteps of the early Christians. They accepted Christ the divine, but not Christ, the son of man. They believed in passive resistance to evil-doers. Civil government is of the world, therefore no believer could hold office or any rank under its jurisdiction. Any true religious reform, as they understood it, must involve social ameliorations. The Mennonites, often called adherents of the Münster Anabaptists, actually repudiated social and political revolution, and their sobriety of conduct is a far cry from the fanaticism practiced at Münster.

The Imperial Mandate of April 23, 1529, accepted at the Diet of Spire by the princes and dignitaries of ecclesiastical and secular territories forming the Diet of the German Empire, decreed: "We

order, fix, establish, and declare by virtue of our Imperial plenitude of power, and right knowing, and it is our will, that all and every Anabaptist and rebaptized one, man or woman, of intelligent age, shall be executed and brought from natural life to death by means of fire, sword, or the like, according to the circumstances of the persons, without previous inquisition by the spiritual judges."¹³⁵

Luther took the position that unless the dissenters were political insurgents, their lives could not be taken, declaring in 1528 that "It is not right and I am truly sorry, that such wretched people are so deplorably murdered, burned to death, and frightfully slain. . . . One ought to restrain and resist them with Scriptures and God's Word; little will be accomplished by means of fire."¹³⁶ Or, as he had written in 1520 in referring to the fate of John Hus: "One should rather convince the heretic with Holy Writ, not with fire. . . . If it were an art to persuade the heretic by means of fire, the executioners would be the most learned doctors on earth."¹³⁷ In the same year he preached: "If you can not win the factious ones by word of mouth, nor convert them by the Word, you may indeed not exterminate them by the sword. . . . Christ will not suffer that even a tiny hair of either the pope or the sectarians be hurt. Many are being killed in our time in the belief that it is possible that some of them, be they Anabaptists or zealots, might return to the true faith. . . . However, this may be done: when there are two confessions in one region, the prince or the city should show some consideration and not endure, that two kinds of preaching obtain in a land or in a city, in order that insurrection be prevented. Those who teach rightly, according to Scriptures and God's Word, let them remain. Those who engage in false teaching, against Scriptures and God's Word, they may be given a furlough. But they must not be rooted out."¹³⁸ Since according to Luther's conception of faith no one may force any individual, thus any Christian ruler, to a particular faith, the government, of whatever faith, does not have to endure the contention of two faiths in its domain if this occasions disunity and strife and thus invokes God's wrath. His advice in this respect referred again and again to the "maintenance of peace," "prevention of civil unrest," and above all, he was determined that no life should be taken for the purpose of establishing the Word.

Luther was aware that there were those who considered eradication of heresy and zealots "a holy cause." He reminded them of the words of Christ: "let them grow together until the harvest," that is to say, you shall not use the sword in judgment on them. Preach the Word to them, and rest assured, there is One who will know what is to be done at harvest time. "For it is no sin, we must know, to let the zealots and heretics live. For Christ's Word is plain that the tares are not to be exterminated by means of the sword. Christians do not seize the sword."¹³⁹ The use of the sword is delegated to the worldly government against insurgents. "Many of our bishops and princes are rooting out heresy [by violence], and yet they have no right to punish those who have already judged themselves and are in the hands of an almighty Ruler. . . . They who think they are serving God by murder and spilling of blood" are wrong. "Rather should you pray for the poor wretches,"¹⁴⁰ that they turn to God and escape His judgment.

Melanchthon, of more legalistic turn of mind, did not approve Luther's "foolish tenderness"; he would have followed the Roman procedure and have the civil government take their lives. Luther preferred the employment of peaceful means. "We have lived and taught in quietness and peace, we have drawn no sword, have neither burned anyone, nor murdered nor robbed as they have done and still do; but we have endured their murders and robbery, their raving and raging with utmost patience."¹⁴¹ History records no instance of the use of "fire, sword, water, or the like" on the part of the Lutherists of his time against their opponents on account of faith — an indication of the staying power of Luther's remarkable influence in this age of violence.

Luther maintained this position throughout his life. The Evangelical princes supported his view. The majority recommendation of the Diet of Spire convened in 1526 urged the necessity of immediate action in the matter of enforcing the judgment set forth in the Edict of Worms sent out in 1521. This Edict declared Luther's life forfeit, demanded the prohibition of his writings and the extirpation of his followers. The Diet of Spire in 1529 interpreted these articles in the following manner: any defection from the Roman Church was to be curbed. In the territories where the Evangelicals were in the majority, Roman Church minorities

should be permitted to stay. However, no renegade from the Roman faith was to be granted admission or protection in the Evangelical domains, and it was the ruler's responsibility to bring all into submission to the Roman Church or to punish them with death.

Thus the Evangelicals were to agree to mete out death to Luther, eradicate his teachings, agree further that no Lutherists were to be tolerated in Roman Catholic lands, yet they in turn must tolerate Roman Catholics in their territories, keep watch over them and guard against apostasy from the Roman faith. They were in short, to hamper and hinder the Evangelical reformation to which they were pledged. However, the Mandate of Spire, 1526, did mean that in the last analysis the prince assumed responsibility for religious matters in his territory. The introduction of reform or the progress of it was thus not prohibited in reality. The Diet of Spire three years later, in 1529, resolved to remedy this situation and to settle the religious revolt once and for all. The Roman Catholic princes, by far in the majority, and the imperial representatives rescinded the permission to undertake religious reform upon their own responsibility granted the princes and dignitaries of clerical and secular territories in 1526. Reforms thus far introduced by Evangelicals were to be brought to a halt. Any expansion of the Reformation was forbidden, any cities even at this moment on the point of conversion to the Evangelical faith were threatened with the "displeasure" of the Emperor.

Evangelicals Derisively Called "Protestants"

The Evangelical princes and cities could not concur in the resolutions passed by the Diet and they voiced their protest against them. For were they to subscribe to the Articles agreed upon by the majority of the Imperial Diet, they would have to condemn "that teaching, which before God we recognize as Christian."¹⁴² The protesting princes and cities then formulated their objections in an "Appellation" offered to this Diet of Spire, 1529. "We stipulate at the very beginning publicly, before God, individually and collectively, that our will, disposition, and opinion is none other than to seek the glory of God the Almighty and His Holy Word, and each and all the salvation of our souls; and to act therein in

no other way than our conscience directs and instructs us to do, and what before Almighty God we are obliged to do. . . . If we were to acquiesce in the Resolutions, we should in fact ourselves act, confess, and do contrariwise to the Christian, divine, and Evangelical teaching, which we recognize as God's Word and truth, and in which we confidently and firmly believe."¹⁴⁸ For this protest they were derisively called "Protestants," a name applied to the reformers and Evangelicals from thence forward. In the matters of faith they were guided neither by the many, nor by tradition; nor by custom, nor anything else except only the truth of God, as they found it in His Word. As Evangelicals or Protestants they had to refuse obedience to political decisions in matters of religious belief. In things relating to the glory of God and the salvation of the soul each had to stand before God alone and give account. For precisely this is the meaning of freedom of conscience, of tolerance, as the Protestants understood it: no human being may force another to act against his conscience; no majority may bind a minority in matters of religion and conscience.

At Schweinfurt, in 1532, an effort was made to restore religious peace; the Evangelicals dared to propose that neither confession be permitted to punish any subject either in body or soul or possession so long as he did not incite to civil unrest and disobedience; adherents of Protestantism, in case they encountered difficulties in Roman Church territory, were to be free to move to a region under Protestant rule. Upon request, however, Evangelical rulers would permit Roman Catholics in their territories to retain preachers of their Roman confession. They reasoned in this manner: that it was well known that at times Jews and people of other faiths were endured and tolerated, and this was considered as serving a useful purpose toward peace and well-being. For Luther's principle, "Our princes do not force anyone to faith and to the Gospel," was not an idle word. The Evangelicals desired nothing more than that all might find the way to the Word. The Roman negotiators however declared that these articles served no good purpose and were not to be obtained from the Emperor.

Nine years after Luther's death, in 1555, the Peace of Augsburg established the coexistence and legal right of the Lutherist Church of Augsburg Confession beside the Roman Catholic Church. This

was historically the first memorable attempt to break through the compulsory power of the one Holy Christian Church. For the first time two religious confessions were tolerated in one and the same state in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. While this tolerance prevailed in some territories, others, especially those ruled by ecclesiastical princes, resisted such an innovation. In the cities tolerance of both faiths was in fact made obligatory. This degree of tolerance was possible only in a country which was held together as loosely as was the German confederation of states. In those individual territories, which, firmly compacted and stringently ruled, endured no religious dissent, the principle, formulated later by jurists, "*cujus regio, ejus religio*," was applied. This directed that the religion of the ruler be the religion of the subject, or, more literally, to whom the land belongs, belongs also the determination of religion. This established territorial religious unity. Freedom of religion was thus granted to the local government, princes, and cities. Any individual German, however, could by emigration out of one territory enter into one of his faith. This meant that tremendous progress had been made for that time. The Evangelical believer was free from the threat and terror present everywhere in the Roman Catholic Inquisition. The princes of the Palatinate and of Brandenburg demanded complete freedom of religion, which, had not the Roman Catholic forces prevented it, would have made Germany a completely Protestant state. Thus the problem was not solved in Luther's day nor soon after. However, by virtue of the fact that Luther, however much against his will, had divided the collectivistic Roman Church, a sequence of events was set on foot which in the end brought about religious liberty for all.

Evangelicals and the State

Whatever decision Luther was called upon to make, and in whatever field, his decision was based upon truth as he found it in the Bible. Because of his singlemindedness of purpose he was able to rescue the Reformation and to assure the continuance of the new Church in the future, irrespective of what changes the political forms of government might undergo. Unless the Church became a private organization, an impossibility in the sixteenth

century since the Church was a public institution and of public concern, he was forced to call upon the territorial princes to become the defenders and bearers of the Reformation. For the sake of the protection and maintenance of the new Church he chose the only alternative this complicated problem afforded him.

The reformation of the Roman Church had taken a course neither desired nor expected by Luther. His one thought had been to serve this Church, whose priest and professor he was, and the Roman Church had rejected him. So a new Church had to be organized. For the establishment and support of the external needs of the Church he accepted the help of the princes. But the prince had to be of Christian faith and confess it by word and deed. Luther was so confident that the power to assured triumph inheres in the Gospel that he could accept this secondary, secular help without scruple. For even he, who "maketh flesh his arm," could not possess any influence over the things of the spirit, and therefore could not essentially harm the Church. He clearly recognized and emphasized without end that state and Church are two totally separate institutions.

Another consideration persuaded him to seek the help of the rulers. While the princes of the Roman Church had given much thought to their own welfare, they had been insensible to the miserable plight of the lower Roman clergy. The material need of many of them was so extreme that they had cast their lot with the communistic insurgents in the Peasants' War. Moreover, with the growth of the Evangelical Church, the emoluments from the celebration of a mass and ordination, the almost sole source of income left the priests, ceased. And when these priests became Protestant pastors, their financial plight was a critical one. What was to be done? Luther believed that no one could or should espouse their cause except the ruler. For surely it was a matter of utmost concern to him whether his state had schools and pastors who would train the people in the fear of God, and in education. Therefore in Saxony, for example, Luther regarded it the Elector's "duty" to provide adequately for the parishes, "in order that the universities and divine services may not be hindered on account of destitution and the poor stomach's lack."¹⁴⁴

Then there was the further problem of iconoclasm and other

outrages. In a long letter written August 21, 1524,¹⁴⁵ Luther represented to the Elector John of Saxony that he might not tranquilly acquiesce in the conduct of those who would impose their doctrine by means of violence, or who would overcome the papacy by demolition of church and cloister, for such procedure is sinful and in vain. Let the spirit of the Christian be simple, as the flower of the field. The spirit of Christ in us knows no thing more excellent than faith and love. "We teach and confess that our spirit . . . brings forth the fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, loyalty, gentleness, and moderation."¹⁴⁶

All offenses must be eliminated alone by the Word of God. But after the rebellious spirits had laid waste the churches and monasteries, he advised, "let the rulers do with them as they like."¹⁴⁷ What are wood and stone, if but men's hearts are won. Christians do not establish the Word of God by use of the fist, and if they were filled with ten holy spirits. Therefore, let the buildings stand. If they should become empty, it will soon appear what is to be done with them. However, the rulers may not simply appropriate them to their liking, but rather ought they to bear in mind that the estates belonging to the convents were mainly dedicated to spiritual purposes; that it is therefore indefensible if the mighty ones in the land confiscate them, as has already been done.

In his tract *Reflections and Instruction Concerning the Monasteries and all Monastic Vows*, 1522, Luther recommended this course of action: "We must return the monasteries to their old, first, original reformation and purpose, that they be Christian schools wherein boys and girls are taught propriety, honor, and faith; after that they ought to be free to remain in them, till death, or however long they wish."¹⁴⁸ Only then when according to their dedication they were used for purposes of divine service, and when they had entirely fulfilled their original intent, might any unsuitable remainder be used for the exigencies of the land or be bestowed upon the poor.¹⁴⁹ In order that this be done without abuse, the government ought to take them into custody.¹⁵⁰ But danger lurked even here, for kings and princes would fight for the "lovely brides Magdeburg, Mainz, Trier, Cologne, Würzburg, Bamberg." He recognized these "are evil times in which the Roman Church is being despoiled and robbed . . . the Church is now more tattered than a beggar's cloak . . ."¹⁵¹

As far as he could he hindered the abuse of power by the authorities. He wrote Spalatin: "In great earnestness I speak of the robbery committed with respect to ecclesiastical estates, and you may believe me, the matter tortures me mightily." He states that he has not been satisfied with the writing he himself has done against this misconduct, and that he had therefore forced his way into the Elector's antechamber on the occasion of the latter's visit to Wittenberg, in order to speak to him about it alone; and there had complained to the princes: for he could not be content with the answer that all would be attended to most carefully, since he could see that the Elector, overloaded with work, could not prevail against his corrupt courtiers; that he for that reason desired to warn the Elector in a published treatise to administer the estates in a different manner, and that perhaps the courtiers would be filled with shame! He concludes his letter with a plea for any advice Spalatin may have to offer, "I shall follow it with great joy. I hate so thoroughly, and in all cases, Satan's rage, cunning, baseness, that I should like in every way to oppose him and harm him."¹⁵² So it was the adversary of all good that was the source of this evil, this corrupt practice on the part of some states in respect to Roman Church properties.

Luther has been criticized for his apparent subservience to the state. But one must examine first of all who these Saxon princes were, whose help he accepted, for it was they who protected him against the Empire, under whose proscription he lived from 1521 to his death in 1546. They were princes like other Evangelical princes, who, as did the first "Protestant" princes assembled at Spires for instance, risked life and position for the sake of their new faith. Frederick the Wise of Saxony was threatened with removal as Elector of the Empire. John the Steadfast, staunch and unmoved by threats and entreaties at the Diet of Augsburg,¹⁵³ refused with other Protestant princes, as Georg von Brandenburg, or Georg Margrave von Ansbach, to participate in the Corpus Christi procession, and answered, along with these, that rather than deny his God, would he kneel down and have his head struck off. To which Charles V is said to have replied: "Dear Prince, no, no, not your head [struck] off!" (*Nit Kop ab! Nit Kop ab!*) John Frederick of Saxony, within a year after Luther's death, was attacked and defeated in battle near Mühlberg by Emperor

Charles V and condemned to death because of his adherence to Luther's belief. He was willing to forsake land and possessions, but not his faith. His sentence was commuted, but he spent several years in prison; after endless negotiations, he lost the electorate and parts of his territory. These were princes such as Luther would have them be,¹⁵⁴ ready to sacrifice all for the sake of once-discovered truth:

"Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also.
The body they may kill;
God's truth abideth still."¹⁵⁵

Is it surprising that Luther should have accepted the cooperation and protection of such men in the first generation of establishing the newly found truth? In 1532 when the Elector had devoted funds derived from the administration of converted monasteries to the improvement of the University of Wittenberg, Luther could write: "That is a princely mind, wherein a lord seeks not his own advantage, but supports poor pastors, students, and teachers out of funds from ecclesiastical estates. His Princely Grace does indeed note that he will need pastors to instruct his subjects in the Word of God."¹⁵⁶ However, in 1543 Luther expressed the fear that future governments might want to rule the Church arbitrarily, presuming beyond that which is their function, and that in such manner the new would be worse than the old.

Evangelical Prince and Subject

What is the duty of the prince and the responsibility of his authority? By denying the validity of the spiritual claims made by the hierarchy and by rejecting therewith the irrefutable immutability of the Canon Law, Luther divested the Church of the power of legal coercion. He clarified the centuries-old conflict between spiritual and secular authority and obligation. According to Luther's definition the Church is a community of pure love and not a legal institution in the traditional sense. He assigned the maintenance of external law and order, peace and justice to the exclusive administration of the state. Furthermore, cultural tasks formerly assumed by the Church were transferred to its jurisdic-

tion. This included among other things the establishment and support of schools, universities, the care of the poor.

Certainly Luther did not "free" secular powers to their own devices and ambitions. For foremost among all were their religious duties and ties to the Church. Luther did not know an independent, autonomous state, he did not know a purely secular state, nor did he think of an independent Church as found today in the contrast and clear demarcation of the realm of activity of each. He was concerned with secular dominion established in a Christian society. The governing body represents a certain station in this society, and, like any other, is dedicated to serve God and His kingdom. Not only is the prince a private person, he is a distinguished member of the Christian communion. By virtue of his position and office he has responsibilities to this Christian community. His office is given him by God that he may serve his subjects to the point of sacrifice of all personal dynastic interests. He is the Christian father of his land.

Therefore he is in duty bound to care for the welfare of the soul of his subject by supporting and protecting true Christian teaching, preaching, and education. The task of spiritual persuasion to a pious and peaceful life, of preparation for eternity obligatory upon the pastor, needs supplemental help from the secular government. Whereas the true Christian requires no prodding toward a God-pleasing life, there are those who must be forced to a just and orderly life before the world. These are the charges of the secular government, which is invested with the power of the sword. All authority, spiritual and worldly, is subject to the same divine law and serves the same supreme, ethical-religious purposes.

Since in Luther's conception the state was part and parcel of the Christian community, it had to provide for the education of its people, and this again was thought of as essentially religious. And religious education implied, as Luther saw it, the nurture and practical maintenance of the Church in time of need. This sustenance, proffered in the period of emergency, was considered to be of momentary duration or transitory in character; but it was recognized by Luther and the Electors of Saxony as constituting an obligation on the part of the Christian government to the Christian Church in its period of stress. Luther's Church was the Church

of the people, a communion of truly genuine conviction. It was not an external, legal community, such as the state is. But prince and subject were held accountable before God in the discharge of what none deemed a mean or trivial trust.

Though it was the duty of the Evangelical prince to lend material help to the Church in its days of peril toward its outer existence, neither the Evangelical nor any other prince was granted the right to exercise any compulsion in spiritual matters. Throughout his writings Luther maintained that the prince had no power over the soul of a subject nor over his faith. His advice to the subject of a prince, Evangelical or Roman, was clear: "If your prince or temporal master bids you . . . to believe thus or thus, to put from you books [unacceptable to the pope], you are to say: . . . dear Sir, I owe you obedience with body and goods: command me according to the measure of your authority on earth and I shall obey. However, if you bid me to believe, or to put from me books, then I shall not obey; for you are a tyrant, you are overreaching yourself, commanding where you have neither right nor authority. If as a consequence he confiscates your goods and punishes your disobedience: blessed are you, and thank God that you are worthy to suffer for the sake of the Holy Word. For if you do not oppose him and permit that he take your faith or your books, then you are in truth denying God. . . . Wickedness [on the part of the government] one may not resist, but must endure; but one shall not approve it, nor serve it nor follow nor obey it, neither by taking one step nor with one finger."¹⁵⁷

Luther categorically maintained that the prince might not prohibit the preaching of the Gospel and he might "not force anyone to faith";¹⁵⁸ this view he never abandoned. He wrote Spalatin: "They [the Roman Church] not only compel [the laity] to external divine services, but also to inward unbelief and impiety of heart. Our princes [Evangelical] do not force anyone to faith and to the Gospel, but restrain this dreadful practice."¹⁵⁹ "We may not compel anyone to our faith nor to our teaching; no one has thus far been compelled. We have but restrained the reviling practiced against our doctrine."¹⁶⁰ The Christian's duty is to God alone; his faith dwells under God's eternal protection and is subject to no human force, limitation, or prohibition. "To obey the

Emperor's mandates and commands which are contrary to the Word of God would constitute an insurmountable and irrevocable breach of faith; in matters of faith one must obey God and Evangelical truth more than man. Moreover, the Emperor has no jurisdiction concerning faith. . . . He is not a judge of our Christian faith, but is only a private person . . . he can not ordain what one is to believe."¹⁶¹

In the beginning Luther wished no interference on the part of the princes with either Roman or sectarian preaching; in 1524 he thought it better to let the "spirits contend among themselves"¹⁶² until a decisive result had been reached. He added two years later that though their belief must remain unmolested, they might not be permitted to live their faith in such a manner as to give offense. No human being has a right to interfere in man's relation to God, but he may in man's relation to man. For it is the duty of the government to maintain peace.

Luther's experiences convinced him that at this moment at least the three confessions, the Roman, the Lutherist, and various sects, could not live peaceably together. In 1526 he wrote the Electors of Saxony: "A temporal ruler may not permit that his subjects be led to dissension and discord through vexatious preachers, whose activities, it is feared, will in the end lead to rioting and factiousness; it is better that one kind of preaching be done in one locality."¹⁶³ This, it should be remarked, was written immediately after the Peasants' Revolt. This was not tolerance as it was understood more than two centuries later, and it is not defending Luther's position to recall that in these very decades the Roman Church was expelling the Protestant from Catholic lands, and that incarceration, beheading, burning at the stake of heretics was in general vogue in Europe; that in the name of their new teaching Münzer and his confederates had committed outrages equal almost to the fierceness of the rebellion they helped to bring about. If one considers that Luther was convinced that the deterioration of moral principles so conspicuous in the Roman Church had stimulated the contempt for all things sacred and even the hatred of this same Church, which assumed such horrifying violence in the Peasants' Revolt, one may understand why he thought it wiser that the state in 1526 seek concord in loyalty to its predominant confession. The

modern conception which requires of the state tolerance for all religions evolved only after years of confessional struggle. It is the necessary form of a state which no longer has anything in common with the Christian government of the Reformation, and has to do with a purely worldly, religiously neutral organization of power.

In March, 1530, Luther wrote the Elector John of Saxony that Christians, including Christian princes, are required to suffer justice as well as injustice from secular government. Neither the emperor nor a prince keeps God's commandments as he should, and yet he remains a prince until deposed. If one rebelled against all infringements of God's commands on the part of the government, there would soon be left neither government, nor obedience, nor law in the land. However: "Should the Emperor . . . force the princes to attack, capture, kill, and exile their subjects for the sake of the Gospel, and the princes believe and know the Emperor to be unjust therein and acting against God: then . . . they shall not obey the Emperor . . . and shall say, 'if the Emperor wishes to bring trouble upon our subjects [who are also his], he may do so upon his conscience, we can not hinder it; but we shall not help nor acquiesce therein.' For one must obey God more than man."¹⁶⁴

Four months later he addressed Albert of Mainz, the supreme Roman prelate in Germany. He pleaded for cessation of the persecutions of the Gospel, for an end to the assassinations and executions of the innocent, condemned because of their belief. If there was no hope of reconciliation between the Roman and the Evangelical, let there be peace, let the Evangelicals believe the truth they have found. "Our teaching does you no harm, it maintains peace and teaches peace, teaches that whatever is yours remain yours and that nothing be taken from you. Let peace prevail between us and do not try to force us to your belief. . . . It is well known that no one can, nor shall anyone, be forced to faith, neither by the authority of the emperor nor of the pope; for even God Himself, who is above all authority, has at no time ever forced any man to faith."¹⁶⁵

THE DIET OF AUGSBURG — 1530

In 1530 Charles V was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation by Pope Clement VII in Bologna.

He was the last German Emperor to be thus invested. The German Nation did not participate in the ceremony. The act rested upon the idea of a universal empire, and to its mission Charles dedicated himself anew. But any exhilaration he enjoyed at the moment was beclouded and troubled. Perplexed in the extreme, he faced the problem of the new faith among the estates and people of Germany. For, however great his power might be compared with the narrow limits of Germany, he realized it was no longer sufficient to stay or nullify the change that had taken place in his nine years' absence.

With the religious zeal and conviction characteristic of him, he worked toward the removal of the offenses objectionable to the Lutherists so that they might be persuaded to return to a purified and renewed Church. But the papal court set itself against the convocation of a reform Church Council with adamant determination. Clement VII was wholly absorbed in Italian territorial politics. Besides, if the heretics could not be exterminated by means of fire and sword, why not come to terms with them somehow? Anything in preference to a Council with its inevitable perils to him and the curia.

Thwarted in this manner in his large designs, Charles summoned a national German Diet at Augsburg in 1530. Here the Augsburg Confession, the first great common confession of Lutherist views, was written and presented by Philipp Melanchthon with the sanction of Luther, who, excommunicated and outlawed, was not permitted to attend. Here the Evangelicals stood forth as a new, publicly recognized Protestant Church. Sustained by a firm purpose they sought reconciliation with patient endeavor. None could have been more humble, even subservient than Melanchthon, upon whose slender philologist's shoulders lay the burden of representing the minority. Charles V was eager, conciliatory, persuasive, offered enticements in kindly spirit, uttered threats, and in all sincerity attempted mediation. But the Papists prevented any possibility of agreement.

Despite the unmistakable sincerity on the part of the Protestants and on the part of Charles, the desired unison in thought could not be achieved nor complete accord in two spiritual views inherently so utterly unlike. The more discernible the strictly Roman standpoint of Charles, the firmer and clearer the position of the

Protestants. To be sure, the timidity of Melanchthon and other theologians present added little honor and credit to the cause. But the lustre of the extraordinary courage of confession born in true religious conviction exhibited by the Evangelical princes and delegates from the cities will not dim. This courage can not be attributed to political interest or economic advantages; their steadfastness, they well knew, involved incalculable risk and grave jeopardy from every point of view. But they were bound in their consciences, and rather would they lose life than deny their God. It was not the faintheartedness of Melanchthon, but Luther's unconquerable will never to yield to compromise and his indomitable, God-fearing faith and trust that determined their stand. From the Feste Koburg he sent them letters of lofty vision, beauty, and strength in which he admonished them to fortitude and encouraged their will to resistance.

A final decree, issued by the Roman estates, demanded again the strict execution of the Edict of Worms. The minority again protested. The one Holy Christian Church was gradually dividing herself into two camps. In the end the two groups did not even meet together. And the Empire of the German Nation was no longer a Holy Roman Empire in the old sense. Moreover, the epoch of heroism and daring, of revolutionary magnificence and splendor in Luther's Reformation came to an end with the Diet of Augsburg. It was evident even here that the Reformation would not much longer remain a battle of idea against idea, of innateness over against externalization, for the papal party was resolved to punish and to prosecute. The Evangelical truth discovered by Luther, so compelling in the perseverance of its purpose, in its energy to prevail, in its display of the grandeur of man's soul, in its emphasis upon inner religious experience, in its singleness of aim to keep it free from all entanglement with secular advantage and ambition for power would within a few decades be forced into the center of a religious-political conflict. And even during Luther's lifetime the invisible Church became involved in the practical considerations of the visible. No matter how grievous an undertaking it might seem to Luther, his collaborators Melanchthon, Bugenhagen, and Amsdorf prepared the way for a future Evangelical legalism, that is, for the future sovereign church tri-

bunal or consistory, by their theological-juristic formulations. These rather than Luther laid the groundwork for a bureaucratic government of the Church. And it can not be denied that the Church as an institution needs some rules for practical guidance.

LUTHER, THE MAN

Accusation of Coarseness in Polemical Writings

From the beginning of the Reformation to this day, Luther has been accused of using "vulgarity" in his writings. In his attacks upon his opponents, in his polemical treatises — and the accusation can apply to these only — he at times used a style not only impetuous, but abusive and insulting. It is indeed a platitude to say that this was habitual in religious as well as secular controversy in his day. On the whole, however, since sermons, analyses, exegesis of every aspect of theology and religious experience overwhelmingly predominate in his works, there is proportionately little of this offensive style in Luther's many volumes.

A slight acquaintance with sixteenth century publications may direct to more equitable judgment. A perusal of the Latin treatise of Henry VIII, written in refutation of the audacious monk Luther, affords an introduction to an uncurbed exploitation of malevolence and vulgarity. Nonetheless in 1521 Leo X rewarded Henry's Roman zeal with the title "Defender of the faith." It would seem that the monarch, conscious of his royal dignity and cultivated mind, would have endeavored to strike a tone befitting his position. The words of Pope Adrian VI were no more restrained than those of the monarch. Luther's opponents decried his bold invective and themselves employed an idiom no less vituperative. "Vulgar," "excessive," "offensive," "an abomination" are an index to the criticism applicable to any selective glossary of phraseology of disesteem that might be culled from the polemics written by both parties in this religious conflict.

Coarseness and stinging insult were first used by the papal legate Sylvester Prierias and the famous Roman theologian Dr. Eck. Luther lamented that some people were of the opinion "that if on the part [of the opponents] a hundred thousand attack us, indeed, if all the foliage and grass were to shout and write against us in

the most envenomed, spiteful, infamous, and unthruthful manner, and we remained silent and acquiesced therein, this would be just and admirable. But if I, poor wretch, occasionally also cry out against so much that is colossally amazing and abominable, then it is said that no one, except Luther only, has written so sharply."¹⁶⁶ In whatever abusiveness there was, one fact stands out: Luther's manner of rebuke differed from that of his opponents; he was a creator and master of language, therefore master in stern reproof, master of a wealth of arresting turns of speech and images — and this his enemies soon attempted to imitate.

Moreover, it should be noted, that expressions that affect unpleasantly today, did not scandalize the age of the Renaissance and Reformation. This is true not because the age was calloused, coarse or barbarous, but rather because expressions conspicuous for their crudeness or grossness today did not then necessarily mean what they now convey. We need only to be reminded of King James' version of the Bible, younger by nearly a century, or of Shakespeare, or, for that matter, of some of St. Paul's expressions in the original. Many words of unsavory flavor today were quite innocent then; others, now considered rude abuse, at that time expressed mild reproof. As it would be imprudent and inaccurate to suggest that Jesus insulted his mother at the Cana marriage feast when he addressed her: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" so it would be unjust and injudicious to assume that word for word the sixteenth and twentieth centuries were identical in import.

Furthermore, a mode of expression offensive to modern taste, an unashamed forthrightness, was of the fibre of the century. A witty playfulness in literature delighted in topics unreservedly bold, excessive, erotic. Not only were the satire and the *Facetiae* outspoken, but the proclivity to frank naturalism in the school texts indicates that Europe accepted this candor as self-evident. Countless thousands studied Erasmus' *Colloquia familiaria*, a text designed to teach the student competency in everyday Latin, the universal language of learning. These *Colloquia* preferred a proper and refined Latin; but there is in them no more reticence, no more concealment in respect to man's carnal life than in the *Facetiae*. Nor did the sermons of a Geiler von Kaisersberg of the Roman

Church practice reserve; no doubt because outspokenness was thought neither indecent nor immoral even in the pulpit.

In none of his works, neither in the polemics nor in his *Table Talks* did Luther speak as frankly as his age, nor as unabashedly as Erasmus in his textbook. That is faint praise, to be sure. One might wish that Luther, the man of religion, had been an impeccable writer throughout. But such he was not. He at no time pretended to impeccability, and that was an admission that he might quite naturally offend. However, one must add that the tenor of his style is neither wanton, frivolous, nor obscene. His directness is most assuredly neither palatable nor pleasing, but the validity of his motives can not be disparaged, even as an allegorical allusion to a woman in travail does not spell impeachment of Christ's purity.

Aside from the vigorous and naturalistic expressions he uses, one is unpleasantly affected by the gruffness, harshness, and sharpness he at times brandishes as a sword before his opponents. In 1525 he wrote to Duke George of Saxony, his bitter opponent, that though he had attacked the Duke with "hard and sharp writings" he meant no harm to anyone, but rather "wished to serve everyone in the best way";¹⁶⁷ [despite all censure] "I retain a kindly, friendly, peaceable, and Christian heart toward everyone; even my fiercest enemies know this."¹⁶⁸ The peaceful and kindly heart of Christ, he knew, might not be too readily discerned in his words of condemnation upon the hypocrites and corruptors of the people.

At times, however, the heat of mind and passionate conviction excited Luther to words decidedly unmannerly, even brutal. When he was angry, invectives rushed from him like boulders pitched down a mountain torrent in flood. For instance, he mistakingly suspected that the attack of Henry VIII upon him was not the writing of the monarch himself, but rather the work of English bishops. He called them "Thomists," "swine." He invited them to burn him, to scatter his ashes to all the winds and spread them through all the seas. His spirit would pursue them still, and, dead or alive, grant them neither peace nor rest until he had crushed in their "brows of brass" and dashed out their "iron brains." Luther was addressing the prelates who were even then filling England with the reek and stench of burning human flesh. Uncurbed ex-

pressions could be his, thunderous, violent as the elemental forces of nature roused in storm and hurricane. But in repose, his style is majestic and beautiful.

How, then, is one to explain such a tirade: "If I am to say, Hallowed be Thy name, then must I say, cursed, condemned, defamed be the name of the papists and all those who blaspheme Thy name. If I say, Thy kingdom come, so must I say, accursed, condemned, demolished be the papacy and all realms on earth that oppose Thy kingdom. . . . In truth, I pray thus every day. And with me all who believe in Christ."¹⁶⁹ In the papacy of his day Luther saw a hindrance to the fulfillment of the petitions in the Lord's Prayer, and he prayed God's curse upon the evil it harbored. Like the prophets of old, he called upon God to bring destruction upon its unregeneracy for the sake of the salvation of those who were caught in its grip. His "kindly, Christian heart," his love for man, hated iniquity and cursed it, that is, called upon God to destroy it.

ATTITUDE TOWARD DETRACTORS

What was his attitude toward the individuals who opposed him? Luther's first antagonist was the vender of Indulgences, Johann Tetzel. When he heard that Tetzel had fallen into disfavor with his superiors, and that he was ill of grief, he wrote his friend Spalatin: "I am sorry to hear that Tetzel is in such trouble. . . . I should much rather he had acquitted himself creditably if possible, and had shown some kind of improvement."¹⁷⁰ He comforted Tetzel by letter and begged him to be of good cheer and not to "fear Luther." He interceded with the Elector on behalf of Carlstadt, his co-worker in the beginning, then his enemy: "God will reward you the more abundantly. He [Carlsadt] must see to his soul; but we must help his dependents, and contribute toward his bodily welfare."¹⁷¹

Luther had written pointedly against Henry VIII of England. When, in 1525, he was told that the English King had reformed and was now favorably inclined toward the Gospel,¹⁷² he wrote him a cordial, humble apology. He asked his forgiveness for having gravely wronged him in that he had thought him, and treated him as an impenitent and obdurate "enemy of God." Luther's first concern was at all times the "cause," not the person. Though he

inveighed against the bellicose Duke George of Saxony, he still wrote him in the friendliest manner. "That my soul be not in peril I must have regard to the soul of your Princely Grace, I must plead, implore, and warn in the hope of moving you and bringing about a happy issue. . . . May the Almighty God grant that I [with my writing] arrive at a favorable moment and that my missive find a gracious reception in the heart of your Princely Grace."¹⁷³ Furthermore: "May your Princely Grace know that I have persevered in prayer to God for you and still continue to pray."¹⁷⁴

Duke George continued his attacks upon Luther, drove the Evangelicals from his territory, especially from Leipzig, and asserted Luther to be the cause of all unrest and trouble. Luther responded to these accusations with utter serenity: "If wishes and good will availed, I should gladly wish him a different heart. Thank God, I have no bitter nor angry heart, neither against him nor any man on earth. As a consequence I am at peace and rest well; but whoever bears me a grudge or rancor, tortures himself . . . is his own enemy and has neither rest nor peace."¹⁷⁵ And the next year, 1533, he humbly wrote the Evangelical refugees from Leipzig, that he was embarrassed as to how to comfort them since his was a deeper joy derived from their steadfastness, their forsaking all for the sake of the Gospel, their faith, their voluntary suffering and bearing of the cross, than they could possibly receive from his words to them. But he admonished: "No one shall curse [Duke George], nor desire vengeance. . . . For St. Paul considers God's supreme anger and wrath is shown in a man of hardened heart . . . and David in Psalm 81 holds that a prickly, acrimonious spirit"¹⁷⁶ is its own punishment. Again and again he wrote that he was praying for his enemies, whoever they happened to be at the moment. He scolded and blustered, but he retained a friendly, peaceable heart toward everyone.

He was aware that his temper was not one of cool objectivity: "I can not deny that I am more impetuous than I ought to be . . . that is the reason I had no inclination at any time to engage publicly in debate; and the more disinclined I am thereto, the more I'm drawn into it against my will."¹⁷⁷ And yet he asserted in respect to his most severe polemics, that he had written "harshly on purpose, from well-considered boldness."¹⁷⁸

Since to him the one thing needful was to find a merciful God,

he could not easily understand any indifference to this need, nor that to some it was foolishness. And since again any single thought is part of the whole, as he conceived of it, this part was either of divine truth and its dominion, or of Satan and his activity. Wherever any good was manifest, he regarded it as the very best. Not often did he misjudge in so great a degree as in the case of Henry VIII. However, the reverse was also true. To love his enemy and to pray for him was not a matter to confound or perplex Luther. "Such prayer is really not directed against the person, but against the clamor which the world is carrying on against the Word of God, preventing the person from coming to grace. . . . As far as the person is concerned, one must pray for everyone; let prayer be inclusive and roll in one bundle both enemy and friend, so that they who are our enemies return and be our friends; if this be impossible [pray], that their evil projects and undertakings be curtailed . . . and that rather the person perish than the Gospel and the kingdom of Christ."¹⁷⁹

The conception of the Gospel held by his adversaries, so contrary to his own experience, represented to him the realm of anti-christ. And so he beheld in the views of his opponents not particularly the individual, but the ultimate cause of all error, the inciter to enmity toward all truth. He struggled "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against the rulers of darkness of this world." He battled with "the father of lies." It was Satan he was attacking when he wrote so satirically, so mercilessly.

In all sincerity he answered a friend's fear that his bristling attacks might injure the cause: "If I am ever to be blameworthy, I should prefer that I speak too harshly and utter the truth too unreasonably than that I should ever dissemble and conceal the truth. And if my frank, obdurate writing annoys the great lords, they will leave my teachings unentangled [with their secular affairs] and attend to their own. . . . Am I culpable in this, then God alone, not they, must forgive me."¹⁸⁰ Therefore he could be friendly toward the individual and yet relentless in castigating his doctrine. He could write a letter of comfort to Tetzl and seek a haven of peace for Carlstadt; he could write about Charles V in a manner touchingly naive, in words conveying admiration and gratitude.

"I must excuse our dear Emperor Charles as a person," Luther wrote after the Diet of Augsburg. For Charles proved that the favor and love of all the world were his and the Evangelicals knew nothing but praise for his Imperial virtue. Luther attributed to Charles "a remarkable, rare gentleness, in that His Imperial Majesty did not wish to condemn our teaching, although the ecclesiastical and worldly princes inflamed and incited him with unceasing insistence. . . . But His Majesty stood as a rock . . . and dealt with the matter in a kindly manner. And is reported to have said: our teaching could not be wholly evil, since it was accepted of so many great, learned, and honest people. . . . Therefore we ought to be gracious to Emperor Charles and thank him for this rectitude; for through him God from the beginning adorned and saved our teaching from the false, blasphemous title of heresy."¹⁸¹

As a matter of fact, even after the Augsburg Diet the demand for a general Church Council continued from Roman Catholics and Protestants alike. Pope Paul III promised and procrastinated. Moreover, it was soon apparent that the plans entertained in Rome would hardly lead to reconciliation and oneness of spirit. In 1535 Luther and the leaders of the Augsburg Confession offered to present their views at the Council, if summoned. But when in 1536 Paul III announced that extermination of heresy would be the task and purpose of the Council, the Protestant princes and cities, united in the Smalkaldic League, declined the invitation. Moreover, France, opposed to Charles V, objected to the convocation of a general synod. When Charles then, a little later, made conciliatory concessions to the Protestant religion in the face of the Turkish threat to Vienna and his need of Evangelical help, Paul III published a virulent breve against Charles and called him another Nero. Luther, in the last of his great polemics, *Against the Papacy in Rome, established by Satan*, defended Charles against Pope Paul.

In 1545, a year before his death, Luther was certain that Charles V "would gladly effect peace and concord in religion, even as he is eager to maintain peace in Europe."¹⁸² For twenty-four years now Charles had tried in vain to persuade the Pope to convene a Christian Council. But the Pope had for the same number of years ridiculed and belittled him. And Luther, as in the case of Charles and his other enemies, believed what he hoped as long as he could.

This was the attitude maintained throughout the long years of struggle. He had long known and emphasized that though hated, envied, maligned, persecuted for the sake of His Kingdom, "I am not in turn to hate, persecute, malign, and imprecate, but rather must I love, bestow benefits, bless him, and pray for him [the enemy]. For the Christian is such a one, that he knows no hatred, no enmity at all toward anyone, harbors neither anger nor vengeance in his heart, but rather pure love, gentleness, and benevolence; even as our Lord Christ and His Heavenly Father Himself."¹⁸³

It must be conceded — and with this Luther agrees — that at times he was more fiery and vehement than becomes a Christian manner and position, that he sometimes exceeded the bounds of modesty and propriety. However, one must also concur in this remark of his, that "even if I am fairly immoderate, I am still humble and sincere."¹⁸⁴ Reprehensibility must be uncovered, if need be by striking sharp blows. The prime objective of his argumentative labors was not to inculcate humanistic culture, but to save human souls. Referring to an attack made upon him by Jerome Emser, the secretary of Duke George of Saxony, Luther wrote in 1521: "I may be presumptive, but since this [attack] does not affect my teaching, but rather my person, I shall not answer harshly. I have often said: whoever will, and however he will, may assail my person; I do not pretend to be an angel: however, because I know that my teaching is not my own, but God's, I shall permit no one to attack it unjustifiably. For this concerns my neighbor's salvation and mine . . ."¹⁸⁵

HIS FORTHRIGHTNESS REBUKES EVIL

Luther seems to incite himself to blunt immoderateness in order to arouse the indurated, indifferent conscience of the age to the indecency and impiety so pervasive. As soon as he was convinced that the gulf fixed between him and the papacy was unbridgeable, that the answer to the Gospel was excommunication and interdict, he felt obliged to set forth the truth as he saw it, and to warn against the corrupt Rome of his day. He had to stir up the heedless from their callousness, he had to shake them out of their apathy. And so his occasional, distasteful straightforwardness was nothing

less than a pastor's protest against what he had to consider reckless depravity.

Luther was by nature ingenuous and genuine. He would not appear other than he was. In days of trouble, disillusion, and danger, his bluff humor built a bridge from the real to the ideal and heartened, invigorated, and refreshed his friends. Toward his enemies he assumed a brusque manner. "You are aware that Christ too, and Paul and Peter were not always gentle. How often does He call the Jews a generation of vipers, murderers, children of hell, knaves! Especially in Matthew 23, in His last sermon, one can read how severely He rebukes them. . . . How sternly Paul reprimands! He calls them dogs, servants of Satan, liars, deceivers, falsifiers, tempters, children of Satan."¹⁸⁶ Christ used irony, though not often, as did the Prophets and Apostles. Luther too resorted to it and on occasion decidedly exceeded moderation; but he could candidly write his opponent Emser: "You would not believe how much satire, what thrusts against you, what irony Old Adam suggested to me, which, however, my Christ again suppressed in me."¹⁸⁷ He would not ignore the injunction, "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." Love and hate are passionate. Indifference is the great sin in the sight of the Lord.

Thus even his polemical tracts bear witness to the compulsion to make way for the good. The walls he had to demolish were strong. Many before him and many in his own day succumbed in the struggle against the hierarchy. Luther could never have achieved the Reformation had he not had the courage to attack so persistently the perverseness he found. Erasmus wrote in his *De libero arbitrio diatribe, A Disquisition upon Free Will*, addressed to Luther in September, 1524: "I hate dissension so much that I fear I should rather abandon a part of truth than disturb harmony."¹⁸⁸ He could not approve Luther's forceful manner of battle. But, though he opposed him, he nevertheless asserted: "All agree in the praise of Luther's conduct, and it is no small prejudice in favor of the irreproachableness of his reputation, that even his enemies find nothing about him they can defame."¹⁸⁹

It was an overwhelming, driving conviction that implanted courage and fearlessness in Luther, for he was passionately con-

vinced, passionately dedicated to the truth he had found. His was the gift of strong emotion, of that intense feeling and eager out-reaching that transports the mind out of and beyond itself. The labor of his whole life was committed to that fervid devotion from which spring inspired love and burning hate. As Christ wept publicly and lamented the fate of Jerusalem and, in His passionate anger, scourged the money-changers and defilers from God's holy temple, so Luther displayed agitated and soul-stirring emotion both in love and hate. Had he been immovably calm, coldly inconsiderate, or stoically indifferent, he could not be one of the very great leaders of religion; he could not have created a poetic, mystic, philosophic, yet virile German language. He yielded his soul wholly to that which he regarded as good and excellent; even in his annihilating hate of that which is "of Satan," he discriminated between the evil and the bearer of it. There was no personal hatred of his calumniators: "I am perfectly tranquil and of peaceful heart toward all of you, although I was offended. God blesses me so extraordinarily that I have reason to be joyous only, to love and to show kindness."¹⁹⁰

At times he called himself "Eleutherius," the Greek term for "the truly free one"; or he signed himself: "Brother Martinus Eleutherius, rather a servant and all too captive."¹⁹¹ He was certain that he owned, as a personal possession, the substance of all truth; he knew further that through his faith he had become that which according to God's will man ought to be. In 1527 he wrote a polemic in answer to Henry VIII's second libelous defamation of him. This was after Luther, believing, as has been mentioned, that Henry had turned from his evil ways, had written him in humble, apologetic vein, recalling his earlier sharp reply to Henry's first attack. "I can be proud, I can be humble; I lack, and I enjoy abundance. On behalf of my teaching [the Gospel] I am far, far, far too proud, relentless, and haughty to please devil, emperor, king, prince, and all the world; but on my own behalf I am humble and submissive to every child."¹⁹² When it was a question of the Word of God, of redemption won through Christ Jesus, he dealt sharp blows. He did not castigate the individual, but his doctrine, if it did not "practice Christ." When his opponents frequently attacked his person rather than the cause he supported,

he was forced to speak of himself. But when he did he was frank, and he acknowledged God as the source of all good: "I am not so foolishly modest that I would deny the gifts God has granted me. In myself there is truly enough and more than enough to humble me and teach me that I am nothing; one ought indeed to take pride in God however, rejoice in one's talents, exult in them, and mention them with praise."¹⁹³

Kindness, Sensitive Discernment

Whereas Luther was impelled to impetuous assertion and unswerving defense of the Word of God when its truth was attacked, by far the greater part of his work shows a man "of tranquil, peaceful heart." The polemical writings constitute a mere fraction of the more than hundred volumes of sermons, exegesis, interpretations, commentaries, letters, *Flugschriften* that came from his hands. Since to him God is pure love, the authentication of this love knew no bounds. It was the good and perfect gift from above which gave direction to his words and deeds. It instructs that he "love and show kindness" to his fellow men, to his neighbor. "Neighbor" included the good and the bad, those near and dear, those far and distant, friend and foe.

His kindnesses were countless; his considerateness, sympathy, understanding, forbearance, delicacy of feeling assumed varied and manifold form. Tenderness was as innate and spontaneous as was his trust in the loving God he had found. Divested of all selfish motives, this love welled up and streamed forth to the help of man in need. He gave advice in personal matters, he comforted, he offered precepts and rules in response to requests from governments, and to city councils. He instructed clergy and laymen, aided men of learning and talent, men and women of high and low degree. He rejoiced with the joyous and was compassionate with the distressed. Nor was it greatly important to him if the pains he took and his efforts were in vain. "With Christians it is not a question of recompense nor of withholding kindness, but rather that they continue and persevere in love; that [love] be divine, voluntary, without ceasing; indeed, that even though it be a lost love among men, there still be a pouring out of kindness and goodness."¹⁹⁴ Whatever it might be, his relation to the indi-

vidual, his work for all, his hymns, his Christmas carols for children, the mode of expression manifests a genuineness born of the heart's spontaneous impulse.

In 1530, for instance, he requested a copy of a musical composition from Ludwig Senfl. Senfl was in the employ of the Bavarian dukes, Luther's inveterate foes. Luther knew that danger might attend the receipt of his letter. Nonetheless, in an impulsive and yet unshakable trust in the triumph of the good over all outer untowardness, he sent it. For "beyond this anxiety for you, my love of musical talent, with which I know you endowed by God, carried off the victory. This devotion awakened the hope that my letter might not involve peril for you. Who would censure a Turk if he cherished art and praised the artist? In any case, I praise and esteem above others precisely your Bavarian dukes, however little they may incline their favor to me, because they foster music and honor it. Doubtlessly much seed toward good lies in hearts that are fond of music. . . . We know that the evil spirits hate music and that it is unbearable to them. I am of the definite opinion — and I do not hesitate to say so — that beside theology there is no art which could be compared with music, since music grants that which otherwise religion alone may give, namely peace of mind and a cheerful disposition. This is clearly illustrated in this, that the devil, the author of melancholy, care, disconcerting bewilderment, flees at the sound of music almost as he does before the Word of God."¹⁹⁵ The prophets wisely proclaimed truth in psalm and song. "However, how do I dare to praise this high and glorious art on so wretched a scrap of paper, to delineate it or rather to scrawl it down? But thus my enthusiasm for music flows and bubbles forth, for music, which so often brought me assuagement and release in great trouble."¹⁹⁵

Rarely, if ever, did Luther request anything for himself. Goodwill, basic in him, did lead him, however, to intercede on behalf of others. One wonders how he could have had the time to write so vast a number of petitions accompanied by recommendations as to the best course to be pursued, and couched in terms of personal concern as though the object of his solicitude were his own cause. His sensitive interest in the welfare of others was extended especially to those in trouble brought about by their own fault

or guilt. They needed help, counsel, solace far more than others. Intercession in favor of such as these did not necessarily stem from excessive generosity, but his thought and compassion were impregnated with the beauty and sense of the Gospel. His consciousness was imbued with an ideality which he had to endeavor to live, which had become the very life of life itself. Besides, it was his duty and office to succor the fallen that they might rise again. "For nothing ought to be dealt with more tenderly than a guilty conscience, which is already punishment enough unto itself."¹⁹⁶

And where reproof was necessary, his rebuke was stern but not forbidding. Witness his reprimand to Michael Kohlhaas* 1534, the incendiary, murderer, and rebel on behalf of that justice which he believed had been denied him. Luther's censure was firm. He invited and persuaded him to renounce all evil. In his hope of a change of heart in the rebel, he warmly and sympathetically admonished:

"Grace and peace in Christ. My good friend! I was indeed sorry to hear of your misfortune, and still am, God knows. From the first it would have been better not to engage in vengeance, since it is impossible to do so without burden of conscience: for it [vengeance] is its own particular avenger, forbidden of God, Deut. 32 Rom. 12 . . . it can not be otherwise. For whoever ventures upon this course, must hazard combat against God and man, and no Christian conscience can support that.

"It is natural that the damage and ill done you should wound you, and it is your duty to rescue and preserve your own good, but not by means of sin or injustice. Whatever is just must be pursued in justice . . . injustice is not rectified by another injustice. And surely it is wrong to be judge and jury in your own cause; and in this you will not escape the wrath and punishment of God. Whatever may be achieved in justice, do; if justice however is not to be obtained, there is no other counsel but to endure injustice. And God who permits that you suffer such injustice no doubt has some purpose in mind toward you. His intent toward you is

* This letter is here translated for the sake of comparison with its fictive formulation by Heinrich von Kleist, 1777-1811, in his well-known *Novelle: Michael Kohlhaas*. (1810).

not evil; He can most sincerely compensate in some other way; you are not forsaken of Him.

"And what would you do if He were to chastise you in different manner, in wife, child, goods, and life? You would nonetheless have to say, if you claim to be a Christian: my dear Lord God, I deserved it, you are just and rebuke my sins all too sparingly. And what is all of our suffering compared with that of His Son, our Lord Christ?

"Therefore, since you desire my counsel [as you write], I advise, accept peace, however it is to be had; and suffer damage and injury in possessions and honor rather than proceed on a project which entails wickedness and villainy, which but serve to further feud. Wickedness and villainy are not devout, own no fidelity to your good, but seek their selfish gain. Finally they will betray you and desert you. Do not consort with the devil nor invite him to kinship, for he comes unbidden. Such companions [wickedness and villainy] are the devil's rabble, whose end is like unto their works.

"Consider what pangs of conscience you must suffer, if you were consciously to destroy so many people, to which you had no right. Acquiesce in the matter, be at peace to the glory of God, and accept your misfortune as coming from Him and endure it for His sake: and it will come to pass, that He will bless you in turn, reward your work abundantly, and you will rejoice in your submission to Him. Thereto may our Lord Christ, teacher and example of all forbearance and helper in need, help you. Amen."¹⁹⁷

Luther's relation to the Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony was most cordial. He knew how difficult the position he was creating must be for the ruler. And thus he wrote for forgiveness: "It oppresses me that your Princely Grace is so deeply involved in my cause and effort. However, since exigency [demands it] and God has so ordained, I beg of you, if it please Your Lordship, graciously to forgive me."¹⁹⁸ Grateful for Luther's considerate attitude, Frederick endeavored to repay the thoughtfulness by protecting the reformer as far as he could. There was remarkable understanding and harmony between them.

It appears that Frederick actually saw Luther only twice. Frederick became the protector of the Reformation, as previously explained, rather by indirection. He depended largely upon the hon-

est and sincere advice of those who were constantly about him and who did approve Luther's stand. Frederick's relations with Luther were carried on by letter and through Spalatin mainly; Spalatin was a product of the University of Wittenberg, a loyal supporter of Luther, secretary to the Elector and one of his most intimate and trusted privy counsellors. In this day of confusion it was not unusual for princes and rulers to seek advice from among the faculties of the universities in their own territories. Mindful of the furtherance of the Evangelical cause, Frederick and Luther tacitly agreed that the particular circle of friends of each associate little with the other. Even as Luther refused to demand the protection of the Elector, so the Elector scorned to be pressed into service by the opposition either as Luther's judge or inflicter of punishment upon him. At the same time he refused to grant this right to others.¹⁹⁹ Luther called him a "dear father . . . a sole comforting refuge in the Holy Roman Empire."²⁰⁰

Elector John, the brother and successor to Frederick the Wise, was bound to the reformer heart and soul. At the Diet of Augsburg, he submitted to "pains, costs, danger, and boredom wholly for the sake of God" as Luther pictures it. None of the furious and conspiring princes and enemies at the Diet could accuse the Saxon Prince John of any guilt except that he insisted on the right to believe in the "pure, gentle, living Word of God . . . otherwise they must admit Your Princely Grace to be an innocent, calm, devout, faithful prince. . . . To have God as a friend is greater solace than to possess the friendship of all the world." God has richly blessed the Elector, Luther says, and adds that He has "chosen, dedicated, and made you worthy that body and goods, land and people and everything that Your Princely Grace has, dwells in such beautiful service of God, that His divine Word is not only not persecuted, but is nourished and maintained."²⁰¹

Selfishness has no place in the love of the neighbor: it is rooted in the love of God, and the Christian must at all times "be a Christ" to his fellow men. Few experienced as directly as Luther the blessedness of giving, and not merely from abundance. He bestowed his gifts forgetful of self, with the spontaneity of a kindly hand and a benignant spirit. This artless warmheartedness had its source in the strong love begotten of the faith in his Redeemer, a love which

stirred him to give, to receive in a manner even unassuming, unpretentious. These qualities were patent in the dedication of his entire life's work to the German people, to all men. In 1530 he said of his translation of the Bible: "This I can affirm and avow with good conscience, that I devoted my supreme loyalty and diligence to it and that no ignoble thought persuaded me. I neither sought nor earned nor did I take a penny for it. That I did not seek any honor in it, God, my Lord, knows. But I did it to serve dear Christians, and to the glory of One, whose throne is on High, who showers so great blessings upon me every hour, that if I had translated a thousand times as much and as diligently, I should still not have deserved to live one hour."²⁰² At another time he remonstrated with his followers, who were beginning to call the Evangelical doctrine Lutherist: "What is Luther, surely I do not own the Gospel. I was not crucified for anyone. . . . How could I, poor pouch of maggots, foul and full of stench, presume, that the children of Christ be called after my wretched name! Certainly not, dear friends, let us abolish biased names and be called after Christ, by whom we are enfeoffed. I neither am nor do I wish to be anyone's master. With the congregation I share the one doctrine of Christ, common to us all, who alone is our Master."²⁰³

Doubts Concerning the Justification of His Cause

But no matter how firm his faith, how great the acclaim, however widespread and enthusiastic the approval, Luther asked himself repeatedly whether his reformation was justified. As early as 1521 he knew he had no choice. "Rather than to do that [forsake the Gospel upon the pope's bidding], I shall, if it please God and if it were possible, let myself be burned ten times. . . . It is no small thing to change the entire religion and doctrine of the papacy. How hard it was will appear on that day [of Judgment]; at present no one believes it."²⁰⁴ Misgivings and scruples beset him. He admitted that the sternest affliction he encountered was the doubt inherent in the thought: "And you are the cause of all of this." The devil reproached him with having brought it about that "the former condition of the Church, which was nicely calm and peaceful under the papacy, is now rent assunder by much vexation, contention, and factiousness."²⁰⁵ But Luther was willing to assume the

blame of revolt against spiritual tyranny and chaos, if spiritual peace and freedom were won, even at the price of outer discord.

Luther had not come to divide or even to abrogate the old, he had come to fulfill. He had to fulfill the teaching of salvation of the Middle Ages, that is, give meaning to it within the frame of thinking of the Middle Ages, and then grow beyond it. Having in his earlier years experienced the meaning and limitation attending the fulfillment of medieval spirituality within him, he had to change and transmute this fulfillment. Thus the old conceptions of righteousness, justification by faith, grace had to be given new and living content. He had to fulfill the demands of the old in order that he might build a way into the new and living content, and into the future. And this was achieved by continuous struggle and moments of solemn decision. "I realize daily how very difficult it is to put away a manner of thinking, which has become an habitualized prisoner to human precepts. Alas, how great the pains and diligence, how convincing a confirmation of Holy Writ did I need to justify my conscience, that I, one person alone, dared to rise up against the pope. . . . How often my heart trembled, accused me and confronted me with its one strongest argument: You alone are wise? Is it possible all others are in error, and have erred so long a time? Suppose you should be mistaken and mislead so many souls?" And this doubt persisted and persists until Christ "assures me and confirms me by His own certain Word, and my heart no longer struggles."²⁰⁶ This was written during the months at the Wartburg Castle.

Qualms of conscience returned with each discovery that a point which, as a loyal priest of the Roman Church, he still accepted as truth, had now to be recognized as false doctrine according to the Bible. But once he was persuaded of the incredible fact that so many had erred so long, firmness of heart returned, and also the conviction that his conscience had decided and was directing him on the right way. In 1543 he said in retrospect: "If anyone had had to endure the trials I suffered, he were dead long ago."²⁰⁷ Not lightly did he pursue his course. "Who would ever have begun preaching if he had previously known that so much distress, factiousness, offense, reviling, ingratitude, and malice were to proceed from it?"²⁰⁸

Several sermons in late 1535 voice his disappointment over the evils of the world. He had so surely expected that all of mankind would "leap with joy" upon being delivered from the pressure and oppression of "our troubled consciences," upon hearing the preaching of the Gospel. But what happened? "Precisely because of such preaching they trample us underfoot, and none is more cruelly hostile than the clergy and the universities. I should not have believed it, I should not have thought to find in any human heart such great disdain of God and His Word."²⁰⁹ Many were the moments of disappointment, discouragement, even of despair: "One might almost cry out with Job and Jeremiah: 'would that I had never been born'; thus I too should like to exclaim, would that I had not come with my books, that I might not be concerned about them, that I might suffer that they all perish."²¹⁰

The burden Luther had to bear was heavy. His work produced consequences which brought him poignant pain and torment;²¹¹ he had hoped and expected that the truth, which set his soul and conscience free and brought him peace, would be greeted with jubilation everywhere. And so it was. But it also stirred up bitter dissension. He had hoped to reform the whole Roman Church through the teaching of truth, yet the truth was abused by not a few. His confessions show how deeply he felt all of this. But he overcame his heartache in that he answered the devil, as he puts it, "that much good also has issued from my teaching."²¹² He knew Christians were not a community of saints outwardly, but that they were unknowing and unawakened and that they had to be taught and brought to the light. And so he praised the loyalty of parents, teachers, magistrates in the discharge of their duty especially towards the youth. "I have achieved . . . thank God, that a boy or girl of fifteen now knows more concerning Christian belief than formerly all universities and doctors knew."²¹³ "I know, thanks be to God, that my cause is good, right, and divine."²¹⁴ He knew that the world is not magically changed by the preaching of the Word, and he knew further that the Gospel will continue embattled with Satan to the end of history. But precisely because of that fact, and ". . . for the sake of the devout, who would be saved, we must live and preach and write, do all and endure all . . . we must struggle and suffer."²¹⁵ For the only weapon and per-

suasion is the Word, which never fails to sustain and strengthen: “. . . when I behold Him who called me thereto, I could never wish that I had not begun. Moreover, I do not want to have any other God.”²¹⁶

As he surveyed the fruits of his labor, Luther from time to time confessed to disappointment. There were moments profoundly disturbed by the observation that laxness and remissness as he viewed it were now more prevalent than before his preaching of the Gospel. In conjunction with the interpretation of the first commandment, “Thou shalt have no other Gods before me,” Luther turned to conditions of his own day, and found that “the Gospel is no longer to their [the people’s] taste and they sink into every kind of loathsome vice . . . [which] is seven times worse [to use the words of Christ] after [the preaching of the Gospel] than it was before.”²¹⁷ And even as Moses fell upon his face before the Lord and fasted for forty days and nights in penitence for the sins of Israel, knowing that his people was not worthy of the Promised Land, so the Germans too do not deserve that the Gospel be freely theirs. For “our Evangelicals are now seven times worse than they were before. Even after we have learned the Gospel, we steal, lie, deceive, eat greedily, swill, and indulge in every kind of depravity. After one demon is driven out, seven worse ones take possession of us, as can be seen easily now in prince, lord, nobleman, citizen, and peasant, who neither stands in awe of God nor heeds His admonition.”²¹⁸

What was the cause of it? None other than that this teaching was not received with joy, but was cast to the four winds; there was “a greater concern for earthly goods than solicitude for the heavenly treasure. . . . The manner and nature of this doctrine begets chastity, obedience, devoutness.” But those who do not accept it with love are “worse now than they were before they ever came to this teaching.”²¹⁹ “For this reason I have often said, that if wishes could effect anything, I might wish that peasant, burgher, nobleman, now shamefully misusing the Gospel, were still under the papacy.”²²⁰

Luther here expressed the belief that the Roman Church in the exercise of an unimpaired authority was better equipped than the Evangelical Church to curb gross license, to induce to attendance

upon divine services and to good works. It employed a strong coercive in excommunication. It stressed another means of correction: reward and punishment, potent persuasives to good behavior and to good works. "The papacy . . . decreed: If you give in abundance, you shall receive this and that. Therefore large amounts were given with an eye to recognition and reward, and this became the principle of earthly righteousness. But now no one wishes to give or to help, since in the light of the Gospel nothing is said of gain or merit."²²¹

Thus Luther agreed with his Roman opponents that as papal control over men's lives ceased, and in proportion as the emphasis in the analysis of good works was shifted, many surrendered to utter worldliness. And one asks, why should great numbers so eagerly embrace exemption from the rigors of religion and morals? Or, if they accepted the Gospel, why did it not beget in them the "chastity" and "devoutness" that Luther bespoke for it? In the first instance, the very exuberance of acceptance of the new freedom must render the earlier practice of religion and good works suspect. Luther analysed the piety of his day in these words: "It is a childlike and servile righteousness. The child's piety is maintained by punishment with the rod or by presenting it with apples, pears, cakes, nuts, sugar, or other gifts. When the rod is no longer used and the sugar is exhausted, piety also comes to an end."²²²

Individuals and nations had been brought up as though they were children, with rod and a plethora of ecclesiastical laws, punishments, and inducements, all proposing to make piety expedient. Faith and morality had declined by this method to a blind submission to authority. The sinew of good works was not an inner necessity, was not love of God and neighbor; it was indeed for many the conceit that good works are charged with egotistical reward and gain. And as soon as this conceit was declared a fruitless vanity, external piety came to an end. Certainly a forced religiosity is none at all, and a morality secured under duress does not deserve the name. Moreover, personal demeanor constrained by force or fear was to Luther pernicious in so far as it disposes to the belief that such demeanor is religious or moral.

To wean a generation from so shallow and extraneous a concept of religion to a conviction that accepts the Gospel "with joy," "with love," as Luther understood it, must obviously be attended

by misunderstanding and misapplication. Luther did not fully realize that alienation from the Church had been in progress in ever wider circles long before his appearance. The Church had abused its authority so frequently, its popes had become so unspiritual and often corrupt, that the additional urge of the Renaissance mood toward world-exploration and world-conquest was hardly needed to hasten the certain collapse of religion and morals.

Confidence in the Justification of His Cause

However, the moments of despair over the shortcomings of some of his own generation were more than counterbalanced by confidence in the new generation, brought up under the tutelage of the new dispensation: "A gentle youth of boys and girls is now growing up, so well prepared in Catechism and Holy Writ that my heart is moved to tenderness (*dass mir's in meinem Herzen sanfft tut*), when I see that now the boys and girls pray and have greater faith, are able to converse more readily about God and Christ Jesus than formerly all pious institutions, cloisters, and schools were able to, and are even now capable of. Indeed, such young folk is a lovely paradise like unto which there is none other in this world."²²³ And in the crucial and tumultuous 1521, he could write in reply to Duke George's attack upon him: "I have no stronger proof nor sign for my confidence, that I have begun in the name of God and that I am teaching His true Word, than that it has spread so rapidly into all the world without my urging or seeking; and that it has grown despite incalculable opposition and persecution at the hands of the mighty and learned ones; and that it has brought about disunion. . . . It is a blessed discord, revolt, and uproar, when aroused by the Word of God; then veritable faith takes root and the struggle against false belief begins; then suffering and persecution return, the proper state of the Christian peoples."²²⁴

After the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, when coercion, war, and suppression threatened, Luther issued an *Admonition to the Germans*. He was aware of the gravity of the situation, yet he joyously and thankfully passed in review the great good the Gospel had wrought. "Formerly no one knew the meaning of the Gospel, Christ, baptism, confession, flesh, good works, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, prayer, suffering, comfort, worldly gov-

ernment, marriage, parents, children, devil, angel, world, life, death, sin, justice, forgiveness of sin, God, bishop, pastor, church, a Christian, the cross. In short, we knew nothing at all that a Christian ought to know. The papacy had obscured and obliterated these things. . . . For I was one of them and know that I speak the truth, and all pious hearts, captive under the pope as well as I, will bear witness that we were eager to know these articles, and could not know them. We knew no better than that the priests and monks were above everything, and we stood on their works, and not on Christ. And now, thank God! we have achieved that man and woman, young and old know the Catechism and know how one is to believe, live, pray, suffer, and die. Indeed there is now a fine instruction of the conscience, how one is to be a Christian and know Christ; now one preaches rightly of faith and good works. In sum, the above named articles of faith have again been brought to light."²²⁵ And in 1537 he could thankfully say: "Many are they who accept the Gospel with us. We force none to it; but they themselves press forward eagerly and none can prevent them . . ."²²⁶ Serenity and wonder alone are evident when in 1536 he pondered the past eighteen years of threat of death, proscription and ban imposed upon him by Empire and Church. "I have continued in joy and good cheer [sometimes to a greater, sometimes to a less degree] . . . but I always committed unto God the cause into which He led me without my will or choice. . . . To him I directed the Lord's Prayer or a Psalm. That has been my whole armor, not merely a defense against my enemies until now, but by the grace of God of so great accomplishment that when I survey it and reflect upon the conditions existing under the papacy, I am struck with wonder. It would not have occurred to me that one-tenth of what is now manifest could ever have come to pass."²²⁷ Indeed, the light of the Gospel now shone brightly, "purified and polished as a mirror," and a reformation and clarification in the things of God was wrought, which no "five Church Councils" would have achieved.

Growth and Development

To struggle with questions and doubt betokens progress in the course of a faith that is born inwardly and arrived at independently. More than a momentary questioning is involved. Fundamentally

doubt questions God's way with man; in Luther's case it questions especially God's forgiving grace. And if the doubt is logically pursued, it must finally ask: Is there a God? Either there is forgiveness of sin for him who seeks it, either there is a way to God or there is no God. Thus this posits the encounter with the very foundation of faith, that is, God, and faith grows in strength as it overcomes the doubt in returning to the source of faith. Certainly few men at any time possess the ethical courage and the logic of mind that was Luther's; few see as clearly as did he, that all doubt calls into question the possession of faith as a whole.

Referring to his early years in the monastery, he observed: "I believed the pope and the monks in all things; now, however, that which Christ says is hard to believe."²²⁸ It is so difficult to grasp Christ's words: "Whosoever believeth on me hath eternal life." It exceeds all reason that sinful man may possess eternal life simply because he believes in Christ. It was not only the battle concerning this doctrine that man is saved through faith, engaged in even in the early years before the beginning of the Reformation, but also a matter of perseverance in this faith and of being in possession of this certainty at all times. "That is the art of the Christian, that I forsake sin and know nothing of it and turn solely to the righteousness of Christ, that I know so surely that Christ's sanctity, merit, innocence, and holiness are mine, as surely as I know that this body is mine."²²⁹ Christ makes our cause his own; "however [this is the hard thing] that we trust Him,"²²⁹ that we act, live this truth, lay hold of it and hold fast to it, no matter what doubt assail us. In the years of trial in the monastery, in this deep affliction, whose "wrestlings exhausted my body, and tormented it so sorely, that I could hardly pant or breathe, I moved about like a phantom, withered and drained, and no man could comfort me."²³⁰

Faith which is a "living and indubitable conviction, through which man is certain above all certainty that he pleases God, that he has a merciful and forgiving God in all he does and undertakes,"²³¹ is subject to trial. Yet this is no cause for dejection: "True Christians are tested by despair because they are aware of their sin. There is nothing more dangerous than security, therefore be of good cheer when you perceive weakness of faith; it is proof that your spirit is good and fears God. . . . Then are we God's workshop, in which He can do His work."²³²

Through years of struggle and recurring doubt Luther came to that certainty and affirmation, which appears in his tract, *Concerning the Messiah, whom the Jews Await*: "Had I however such a Messiah who could heal this ill that I no longer feared death, that I were certain of life ever and eternal, and needed no longer to tremble before God's wrath: then would my heart leap and become drunk with sheer joy. Then would there be kindled a fire of love to God; praise and thanksgiving would never cease. Were He to give me after that neither gold nor silver nor other riches, all the world were a paradise, even if I were to live in prison. Such a Messiah we have in Christ, and we thank God, the Father of all mercy, with overflowing joy of heart, exultantly and gladly we forget all sorrow and woe Satan brought us. Indeed, we have such a Messiah who says to us: 'Whosoever believeth on me shall live, even though he die.'"²³³ Here Luther's exuberance proclaims the fruits of his personal faith, the answer to his early despair; a peace of mind, a joyousness of spirit, an abandon in the surrender to God, which neither priest nor Roman Church had been able to offer him.

To resuscitate a Christianity desiccated and crumbling, a faith had to be proclaimed which recognized and gave direction to the eager impulsions of the age, a faith whose freedom was not blind obedience to authority, but a voluntary, personal appropriation of God's grace; a faith too, which of necessity, and yet freely, begets an ethic whose ideal was not world-flight, but a sanctification of the world in which the believer lives. This was Luther's conception of religion and morals, to which he finally came, and it is this Christianity which he rescued for the world. For his faith in God was secure, and he knew beyond all doubt that God's Word and grace alone can preserve the world from chaos and maintain life and order. To this he held fast to his last day. And this faith and grace he found in the one *theologia crucis*. Through this theology of the cross and in suffering and affliction the Christian lives in the righteousness imputed to him, the sinner, by Him who is Love.

INSTITUTIONS OF SOCIETY

In all things Luther summoned man to the abandonment of old and lifeless forms and to the building of modes new and inwardly

meaningful for the purpose of purity and sanctification. All social organizations, government, family, calling, were created by God and are good in themselves as all that God made is good. But man in his selfish will vitiates them, for he does not know how to use these God-ordained institutions. Luther's principle not to fear man, but to revere, trust, and serve God in all we do, is basic in his practical judgments. He has been called inexperienced and naive in political matters, has been labelled conservative. To be sure, Luther's conception of man's status in society, and as a member of this society, was thoroughly religious. He clung to the old European idea which conceived of social organization as a cosmic order, that is, as established by natural law and divine institution, even as is the course of sun, moon, and stars. And this social order in its division into *Ecclesia*, *Politeia*, and *Oeconomia*, that is, man's life on earth, is subject to divine and natural law. Whatever adjective is applied to Luther's attitude toward society must take into account the fact that he saw God as all-effectuating, all-governing, and therefore as the Lord of history. To be sure, history is the doing and performance of imperfect beings, limited and dependent; but to Luther divine omnipotence stands behind men, and fulfills its own purposes and goals in a way quite contrary to human expectation and calculation. Luther was intent above all upon building God's Kingdom in man, hence also in man's everyday affairs; for that very reason he refused to eternalize purely human traditions, institutions, and achievements.

The Church

It should be made clear at the outset that members of a congregation are not the true Church in Luther's view; people do not constitute the Church. The Church is not in the first instance a sociological institution. For the outer organization is a "masque," it is "the shadow of the Church." Its center is the Gospel, Christ Himself. The real Church is "hidden," "spiritual." True saints are not visible. The Church is theological in being. Even as God is active, yet hidden in Christ, thus the true Church is active, but hidden in the world.

Why then should not the Christian confine himself to his own, individual, and direct worship of God? Luther answers that it

pleased God to reveal Himself in definite, concrete systems and order, holy in themselves because instituted by Him. His Word gave rise to the Church, and upon the foundation of the Word are Church and sacrament erected. "The Church is the daughter of the Word, not its mother; it is born of the Word."²³⁴ Incomprehensible in Himself, unfathomed by our most subtle abstractions, God revealed Himself as was His will. He could have spoken directly to man, He did not have to choose particular witnesses, He did not need to establish through them a special order called the Church. But it was and is His will that men work with Him as His "co-workers." In Christ, through the activity of the Holy Spirit, He builds His Church.

Despite his pronounced individualism, Luther recognized that the community is a gift to the individual, that it sets up a task for him. Therefore the "instruments" and "co-workers" of God are united in a body by His grace. All are priests, and therefore servants to all Christians, to all sinners. And the keys were given to the whole communion, not to Peter alone. For the sake of orderliness pastors are chosen by the congregations. They are not appointed by the bishop. Since every believer is a priest, any Christian may act as pastor in an emergency "out of his duty of love" for his neighbor. There is no ecclesiastical or legalistic government of the Church which issues "decrees." It is the bishop's duty to visit the congregations, even as did Peter. Matthew 16 and John 21 do not establish the primacy of Peter. Peter did not ordain the other Apostles. But the faith which he shared with others, was and is the foundation of the Church.

God permitted that the Roman Church develop gradually in history. The Council of Nicaea, for instance, rightly assigned the churches in Italy to the care of the pope; to be sure, "according to old custom, and not according to divine right."²³⁵ As in the case of any other government which arose in history with God's permission, the papacy must be borne. But the hierarchical order is not biblical. And those persecuted by the Roman Church are actually witnesses of the truth, even as was John Hus.

In the early days Luther's one thought was to right the wrongs in the established Roman Church. Regeneration of the Church involved the community of believers, that is, the *corpus mysticum*

Christi. This body of Christ has to do with sin and salvation, anxiety before the wrath of God and His grace through faith. As time went on, Luther reluctantly accepted the fact, that if the Christian doctrine in its pure form was to find understanding and become effective, a new Church had to be organized. He resisted any impetuous new organization of outer church life which might deceive men into thinking that they had really changed their inner lives. It was his hope that all outer forms might develop gradually out of the new disposition awakened by the Gospel in men's hearts.

Luther would permit no new laws to be set up in place of the old. The Roman Church needed a reformation precisely because it compelled men to accept its dogma with all its human inventions as incontrovertible certainty and truth and forced the believer to this acceptance by means of fear and persecution. Luther would permit no compulsion to faith, for compulsion stifles all true spiritual life. He trusted the all-effectualness of God's grace, and therefore fought for the purity and genuineness of a reformed and reborn temper.

As a communion of Christian love in which all are of one mind in Christ the Church needed no outer organization. But as a Church of the people it did, for as such is contained Christians and "lip"-Christians. And Luther was disinclined to entrust the regulation of the Church to such a mixed group. He could have followed the course of the later Calvin in Geneva; which was, choose fanatically convinced disciples of the new doctrine, exclude all those not certain in their belief by means of excommunication, and create an organization according to the Bible. But Calvin could do that only by establishing a new law: examination of consciences, inquisition, and sentence, and by the introduction of a new dogmatic legalism of the Church which used the Bible instead of the Canon Law as a guide. Luther objected to these procedures. Therefore, if there was to be authority in the affairs of the Church there was but one other course open to him: to appeal to the dignity of the established secular power.

The Church, however, might request the help of the government only in the case of extreme exigency. Civil authorities might convoke a General Council to contravene perversion and to introduce

order. It could do that inasmuch as laymen, priests, princes, and bishops are all priests, therefore "co-Christian" and "co-spiritual." For any differentiation among Christians takes into account their office and calling only, not their rank or station. With the sternness of the prophet, adamant before any thought of danger or temptation, Luther here assumed responsibility in political matters. He wrote to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation in 1520: "Whatever is opposed to God and is harmful to man in body and soul, every parish, city council, and government not only has the authority to dispose of and abolish . . . without the will of pope and bishops, but is indeed by the eternal salvation of men's souls in duty bound to restrain, even though pope and bishops were not in favor thereof."²³⁶ And in conclusion: "May God grant us all a right, Christian understanding, and especially to the Christian nobility of the German nation a true, spiritual courage to do what is best for the poor church."²³⁷

In the case of an emergency in the Church, the civil government is justified, even obligated, as Luther saw it, to further the reform of the Church, for this is its Christian duty. He was certain: "The soul is not in the power of the emperor; he can neither teach it nor guide it, neither can he kill it nor bring it to life, neither bind nor absolve. Whatever belongs to heaven and to the eternal kingdom, that is subject to the heavenly Lord alone."²³⁸ But Luther stressed one point, namely, that the Church might appeal to secular government only when it found itself in a state of dire distress.

Luther was opposed to the principle, "*cuius regio, eius religio*," formulated and adopted after his death. The established Church, permanently supported by the government, actually came into being without him. Melanchthon built upon Luther's early thought that spiritual life is realized in history, that social and temporal laws, order, and authority as instituted by God in history were thus instituted for the mediation of His will. Melanchthon's view, the Diet of Spire in 1526, and the electoral Instruction of 1527 indicate, that the established Church with its crown rule was even at this time on its way. Thus then the responsibility for the outer maintenance of the Evangelical Church fell upon the government. As long as Luther's towering personality influenced the Saxon

court there was no danger of the rulers' abuse of this new obligation in Saxony.

The Evangelical congregation judged in matters of doctrine and called and deposed pastors. The members of the local government belonged to the congregation as did the civil officers. Often the voters elected the same men to the parochial church council and to the council of city magistrates. On the whole Luther had greater confidence in them than in "Sir Omnes," from whom, after the Peasants' Revolt especially, he expected tumult rather than patient, quiet growth and clear insight. The true Church of Christ, however, was always the invisible Church. Luther remained loyal to his one definition: the Church is there, where God's Word is preached and accepted in its purity.

Outer form and ceremony were of little importance so long as the Christian conscience remained free and the work of God's Word in man's heart was not hindered. In divine services Luther did not demand that the ceremonials, a part of the Roman liturgy of his day, be abandoned. He insisted on one freedom only; the teaching of Christian truth as found in Holy Writ. In 1539 he wrote the Provost in Berlin: "If your lord, the Margrave and Elector, will permit the Gospel of Christ to be preached in its purity, without human supplement, and permit the two sacraments of baptism and the blood of Christ to be dispensed as it was instituted and is willing to eliminate the invocation of the saints . . . and not let the sacraments be carried in procession, and eliminate the daily masses for the dead, and not consecrate water, salt, and herbs, and desires to sing pure liturgy, Latin or German, in *circuitu* or procession, by all means join in the procession and wear a silver or gold cross and the surplice and stole and velvet, silk or linen . . . and if one surplice is not enough for the Elector, put on three, as the High Priest Aaron wore three, sumptuous and beautiful; even as the canonicals are called *Ornata* by the papacy. And if His Princely Grace isn't satisfied with one *circuitu* or procession, join in with chime and song, and make the round seven times even as Joshua and the children of Israel compassed Jericho seven times. . . . For these things, if there is no abuse, neither add to nor detract from the Gospel: so long as the conscience is not bound thereto

as a requirement unto salvation. If I could persuade the pope and the papists on this point, how joyful I should be and thankful unto God."²³⁹ Luther wished to point out here that outer ceremony was not a matter of concern so long as it did not degenerate into idolatry, and was not substituted for the message of the Gospel.

In 1528 he wrote as he had in the stormy days of Carlstadt and Münzer: "Images, bells, mass or eucharistic vestments, ornamentations in the churches, altars, lights, and the like, I consider a matter of choice; whoever so wishes may abandon them; although paintings from Holy Writ and desirable stories are indeed conducive [to good]. I hold these things to be free and voluntary, for I do not agree with the iconoclasts."²⁴⁰ Luther did not prescribe any definite form of divine worship since he found no single authoritative model for it in the New Testament. That which seemed to be incompatible with the spirit of the Gospel in the Roman Church service was to be eliminated gradually, in such a way, however, that the weaker members of the Evangelical faith might not be offended. In 1542 he reiterated what he had so often said: "ceremonials are not articles of faith, but churches have frequently stressed them more than the Word and the sacraments, and the people have readily made an eternal thing out of the outer form. . . . My position is, let the established ceremonies which are not impious stand . . . in this we are free . . . for we are not subject to the ceremonial except in that which love demands."²⁴¹ "We must be the masters of the ritual and not let the ritual equal faith . . . above all, in our preaching and teaching, we must make clear the difference between formality and faith,"²⁴² that is, between content and form.

Let no conscience suffer coercion in respect to outer form, but in this matter retain "consciousness of freedom."²⁴³ Uniformity of service among the Evangelicals was not essential, as Luther saw it, indeed, he would approve a diversity of custom and habit. If there be but unity in doctrine and faith, the varied forms of worship "will compose a lovely harmony as of many voices in music." Let the Word, the bond between heaven and earth, be uttered in its nakedness, purity, and simplicity, and various possible ceremonies grow out of a wholly inward religious attitude.

He reminded his age that even in the Old Testament, which

insisted on circumcision and the acceptance of the Law of Moses as a prerequisite to eligibility and membership among God's chosen people, there are examples of great faith outside the Jewish race and its required ceremony and law. "There is Nebuchadnezzar, converted by Daniel, a man of true faith, and with him no doubt many in his kingdom; Darius and Cores in Persia likewise came to faith through Daniel; then there is Job, richly endowed in the knowledge of God and faith in Him, and together with him his house and friends; Hiram, king of Tyre at the time of Solomon; and there must have been many in many lands not mentioned in the Bible, men most acceptable to God, but neither circumcised nor bound to the Law of Moses."²⁴⁴

In truth all heathen ought to praise God that the Law of Moses is not necessary to glorify God or to become God's people. "Even in Moses' time it was not essential. . . . Jonah the prophet shows plainly that the city of Nineveh is called the city of God and had the rightful God of the Jews; and yet they were heathen, uncircumcised and knew not the Law of Moses. Also Lot. . . . King Pharaoh in Egypt in the day of Joseph. . . . It is enough to praise God . . . that is, know, believe, praise and give thanks: these things make the people of God. . . . God demands that He be praised and glorified, as the Gospel preaches to all the world . . . then are you His people . . . and one in faith and divine service together with heathen and Jew."²⁴⁵

In his disputation with Dr. Eck at Leipzig in 1519 Luther admitted that he was not certain "whether Christian faith may suffer that another head beside Christ be established in the universal church on earth." For "the confession of faith stands firm: 'I believe in the holy church, the communion of saints'; it does not say as some people now drivel: 'I believe that the prelate is the holy church.'"²⁴⁶ Nonetheless, it was the early Luther's firm belief that men and women in the monasteries might "very well remain in the order [of monk or nun] and retain a free conscience according to this teaching. . . . Priest, monk, nun . . . know this, that to believe in Christ and serve your neighbor is the right way; but beyond that, remain wherever you are."²⁴⁷

He himself acted on this conviction. At an Augustinian convention in Heidelberg in 1518 he was excused from his duties as dis-

trict vicar.²⁴⁸ The next year Johann von Staupitz released him from his vow to the Augustinian order, but Luther looked upon this as excommunication. Only in October, 1524, did he lay aside his Augustinian garb, thus renouncing monasticism for good and all. Luther concluded that the asceticism of the monastery was not necessarily willed of God, for it rejects responsibilities to our fellow men in the world and prefers petty, anxious obedience to the prior, as he said. After all God judges our life and works according to the faith and love with which we endow them and the fidelity with which we use our God-given talents. Thus the vow of a monk is bereft of validity, and in clear conscience, after much wrestling with all problems involved, Luther renounced his monkhood. And, it should be added, the injunction above to monks and nuns was deleted from editions of his Sermons appearing after 1532. The outer form of the Church may vary, but there is but one source of devotion: the Bible. Reading the Bible and thinking in biblical terms characterized his Protestantism.

To the Bible Luther added the Catechism. In clear, beautiful simplicity of style its questions and answers set forth the final meaning and final mystery of the relation of God to man, the meaning of divine wrath and divine forgiveness, the judgment and the love, both good, the Christ upon the cross, the Christ dead and resurrected, through whom we are apprehended of God. And Christ is made the center of illumination for the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Confession of Faith in the Triune God, the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the article of faith which is the absolution from sin. This remarkable booklet was designed to impart eternal truths to children and laymen, that they might learn to think and live in the presence of God throughout life. The reformation of the Roman Church found this method of presentation so admirable and effective, that it set up and adopted the *Catechismus Romanus* at the Council of Trent, assembled in the latter part of the century. And in the Church which Luther established, the Bible, the choral, the catechism, preaching and practicing Christ to the glorification of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were and remain the source of all strength and all comfort.

What is the Church, as Luther understood it? It is redemption

through the cross. The Church is wherever Christ is preached in faith and accepted in faith. Its decisive and distinguishing sign is the presence of Christ, His actual presence in the Word and in the sacraments. It is the presence of the Triune God which constitutes the community of saints. It is not the pious men and women who create the Church, but the presence and activity of the living God, who speaks to a lost world, is active in it, and blesses it.

Because the foundation of the Church is the Word of God, its one important function consists in the preaching and teaching of the Gospel. Its effectiveness must be committed to God. Luther built the Church, the universal Church he envisaged, on the one concept, classic in simplicity and meaning: Wherever there is faith in the omnipotent God, there is the living community of believers. And faith is born out of the Word which God speaks. "Faith is the true divine service . . . trust and confidence in His grace . . . the assurance . . . that He alone [not our merit, not our works] is our valor, our defense, and our comfort. This establishes that I have a true God, and this is the true worship of God."²⁴⁹ The Word of God and His sacraments as found in the Bible make the Church — all else, Rome notwithstanding, is human deception. Spiritualists and enthusiasts may claim enlightenment inspired directly by God, but Luther found, such "revelation" is often all too human and not to be trusted.

This was the perspective of Luther's reformation of the Church: elimination of the rule of the papacy over man's souls, adherence to the Church as "a communion of saints," doing homage to the Father, to the Holy Spirit, and to Christ, its only High Priest and Pontifex, according to the truth that Christ alone is our mediator. Martin Luther's way pointed to the renascence and reformation of the Church. This denotes: renunciation of the Roman-ecclesiastical-legalistic faith of authority, and perseverance in the pure faith in Christ Jesus; and concomitant therewith the abandonment of Roman emphasis on merit in favor of pursuance of the ethic of pure faith.

The Bohemian Brethren, or Moravians, decided upon their confession of faith in 1532. This was translated into German and published in Zürich. Dissatisfied with the translation, they recalled as many copies as they could and published a more adequate German

version. This appeared in 1533. The Foreword written by Luther expresses his fervent hope in the realization of the one purified Church on earth. "Because I should like that all the world become united with us in one faith in Christ and we with all the world; if it were not possible in speech, yet in heart and mind . . . it is my prayer that there be less dissension, less schism, and that there be peaceable concord of one mind and spirit, until in the end we shall all praise the Lord Christ in the same Word and manner. . . ." ²⁵⁰ The Church is the body of Christ. All true believers are members of this body wherever they may be found.

Throughout the history of the Church, indeed, throughout the history of the world, God is the sovereign Ruler, according to Luther. Even as Bible history shows how the believer fares in the hands of God, thus are the occurrences of profane history not outside the provenience of God. The Bible presents the suffering and the resurrection of the faithful, their justification by faith. Here is recounted "the play of God" (*"das Spiel Gottes"*), the drama God plays with His own, the continuous alternation of affliction with comfort, descent into hell with ascension into heaven, annihilation with life. Here God addresses the sweet words to His beloved ones: "You are my dear little bird, with whom I play" (*"Du sollst mein Spielvögelein sein"*). ²⁵¹

All of history is "God's puppet-play" (*"das Puppenspiel Gottes"*). Mighty men dance on the stage of world history like puppets, we do not understand the meaning of the play, nor do we see the wire-puller. Alexander and Hannibal, for instance, were in the final analysis subject to the sovereignty of God, who allotted to them their time, allowed their empires to grow and then destroyed them. ²⁵² Why it is thus we do not know. History grants us a glimpse of "the back of God" (*"Gottes Rücken"*). After He has passed by the scales fall from our eyes and our eyes are opened: Verily, that was God! He is everywhere! He alone is almighty! Man's thinking and conceiving and doing are as nothing compared with the majesty of God—therefore history is His "puppet-theatre."

The world is the scene of battle between the two types, Cain and Abel, always present in history. These brothers illustrate the law and way of God with man, with the believer. He turns every-

thing upside down. The first is given second place, and the second is made the first. "This play He plays with His saints in eternal interchange."²⁵³ Battle is the sign of the presence of God. Every moment in history is burdened with contention: the struggle between truth and falsehood, concord and dissension, preservation and destruction. Wherever God speaks Satan is also at work. Therefore no period in history is wholly good, none wholly evil. The battle between good and evil is basic in life, battle belongs to the manifestation of the living God. And this view holds for the history of the Christian Church.

Temporal Power

Luther's conception of the state followed directly and logically from his Christian faith. Man is not an absolute ego standing alone in the world and creating all things out of himself. Therefore, no ruler and no state can be an absolute entity endowed with absolute power. But ruler, state, and subject are members of a divine order, and God stands at the beginning of all political existence. The complex of political and social life is essentially the order and authority of God. All institutions and organizations that are the bearers of law, order, and authority, as civil law, education, and the authority of parents, are of divine origin. They are God's gift to the world, a precious jewel, inasmuch as law and order are endowed with divine dignity and are a protection against chaos. Chaos and evil prevail as soon as law and authority cease. God permits his sun to shine over the just and the unjust, and His order and law are established among men that life may come to full unfolding.

The form of government is not important either for the Bible or for the Reformation. That does not mean that Luther simply sanctions that which is, for he knew too well the "mad foolishness" of princes and their shortcomings. And certainly it was not a matter of mystical glorification of the person of the ruler that was basic in Luther's conception of government. Luther probes more deeply and beyond the ruler discovers that law in itself, and order for its part partake of a dignity divinely begotten.

Without end he stressed that all government should be Christian and should execute its duties in a Christian manner. Kings and

princes, if they would be Christians, must practice humility and gentleness. God did not place them in their seats of responsibility that they live sumptuously, seek their own, and do as they like. They must serve their subjects with all the talents and abilities they possess. A prince may not indulge his pride nor gratify his inclination. It is the high duty of his office to seek the benefit of his subject and to insure his welfare.²⁵⁴ Luther broaches the ethical basis of a constitutional system. His many concise, exact statements in advice to princes and civil authorities pre-formulate the famous words uttered by Frederick the Great two centuries later: "I am the first servant of my state." At no time did Luther lose sight of responsibility, which is the ethical constituent axial in every office, calling, or occupation.

Civil authority may neither teach nor command the servants of the Church, for the basis and foundation of all government and justice is God. Government is instituted in God, and it must discriminate between the exercise of peace and the abuse of power. The prince must seek to maintain and foster concord among his subjects, keep peace in the land and grant equal rights to all. Above all, be he ruler or ruled, each must carry the burden of the other. The governing body must be guided by a Christian love of God and man, and it must perpetuate the glory of God. Its activities, however, must be confined to the secular realm, that is, it must protect and preserve human life, goods, and possessions. Through the instrumentality of government God safeguards peace and maintains justice, preserves personal security and rights, and promotes the material welfare of all. "Secular government maintains temporal peace and justice and life, it transforms wild animals into men and prevents man from falling to the level of the beast."²⁵⁵

The Christian is subject to worldly government even to the point of service in war.²⁵⁶ However, here the Christian ought to exert acumen and practice clear judgment. In April, 1542, Luther wrote the Elector John Frederick: "Whoever fights and dies in obedience, in defense, and protection of his country, may he die blessedly. But whoever joins in a vengeful and quarrelsome cause will be delivered to the vengeance of God. . . . In all sincerity I advise

that whoever serves such a quarrelsome prince in warfare run, run as fast as he can from the field of battle and save his soul, and forsake his vengeful, foolish prince.”²⁵⁷

Every exercise of personal arbitrariness results in the cessation of divine law and order. And it is therefore necessary to distinguish between obedience and free submission to God’s order on the one hand, and, on the other, a cringing servility and submissiveness to the government out of fear. If the state should attempt to coerce a subject to disobey the commandment of God and to hinder him in his obedience to Him,²⁵⁸ the obedience to the government ends and the duty is abrogated. Even though possessions, honor, body, and life be forfeit, God’s command must stand. Therefore obedience is to be withheld, for instance, “if a prince should wish to make war in an unjust cause. For God has commanded that we should not kill our neighbor nor injure him; nor should we bear false witness, rob, lie, cheat and the like.”²⁵⁹

Warfare may be a right and a duty in self-defense. It may also become an obligation of protection. If war threatens it is the duty of the government to offer to negotiate for the sake of peace. If that is refused, then the land may defend itself. With the life and goods of the whole country endangered, a war of defense may be undertaken. In the case of enemy aggression and “attack upon you it is Christian and a work of love to kill the enemy, rob, and burn, and do everything to inflict damage until he is defeated. . . . And when they are defeated, show mercy and peace to those who surrender and humble themselves.”²⁶⁰ Thus Luther believes that war may be waged for the protection of the life and possessions of the subjects. Referring to the danger from the Turks, the ever-present threat to Germany, he suggested that the government be prepared to defend itself, that propriety and decency be perpetuated. He would prefer his children’s death to their submission to Turkish customs. The Turks knew no honor. They respected no loyalty in marriage. They sold their children. And such customs are as base as murder. The Hungarians, resisting the Turks, were convinced they had no choice in the matter for the sake of their wives and children. They would rather be dead than permit such shamelessly wanton conduct in their families. “For the Turks drive peo-

ple to market, sell and buy them, use them as cattle, be they men or women, young or old. . . . Therefore, let us pray God that He protect us."²⁶¹

"St. Paul teaches that the established, secular government be honored and obeyed; though it does not make people devout before God, it does assist greatly nonetheless toward affording peace and protection to the pious, and [it affects] that the wicked can not commit evil fearlessly, or indeed calmly and freely."²⁶² Thus, the Christian is to obey the government in all freedom, where it is just, and refuse obedience wherever it runs counter to the command of God. "I am guilty if I am not obedient to the government, for God has subjected me to it and commanded that I do its bidding. For it is the will of God that the sword serve to protect the devout and punish the wicked. That is its just duty. If however, the government should become tyrannical and attempt to force the people to act against God and His commandment, then it is no longer 'the sword,' and I do not sin if I do not obey. However, if the sword punishes vice and protects virtue, obey it, for then you are not obeying man, but God."²⁶³ Luther would have the subject of a state obey in freedom, not by coercion, because he does homage to the divine order which is the essence of God's institution.

The Christian does not despise man nor does he fear man, but he freely serves him in love. That is the basic thought of the Reformation in respect to civil obedience. "Whosoever would boast of freedom, let him first conduct himself as becomes a Christian and serve his neighbor. . . . In freedom we are to act as servants of God. . . . In like manner, I would also not be forced to submit to worldly princes and lords, but would do it freely; not because they command, but that I serve my neighbor. Thus all our works must flow from joy and love, directed toward our neighbor, since we need nothing for ourselves."²⁶⁴

The state is organized on the one hand to oppose and punish human wickedness, which it cannot eradicate, and to promote the good of its citizens on the other. The influence of Christianity in this world must be strengthened, and the Christian must act on behalf of his neighbor and be willing to suffer rather than use brutal force. The Christian must above all insist that the power

of sin and evil be broken, and that a society arise which is worthy of the name Christian. Therefore Christians are to be active in the state. They are not to separate themselves and remain aloof self-righteously. Good, regenerate men can and will change bad, unregenerate conditions. That individual alone, who is reborn, made a new man, ruled by the Holy Spirit, can transform the world. For every individual Christian is effective in the world in which he lives.

If the government should inflict injustice, torture the body, and confiscate one's possessions, one must endure it; but the Christian may not permit himself to be persuaded to act against God's commandments, nor may he obey in that which according to his conscience is sin. "We are to do what the government demands, but it may not bind our consciences; it may rule in temporal things only."²⁶⁵ "Worldly government has laws to protect man's goods, honor, and life; this does not mean, however, that thereby it may rule man's conscience before God."²⁶⁶ It may not interfere in spiritual matters, it may not decide in matters of religion; it exercises no stewardship over the Church. It may not force anyone to believe thus or thus in his heart, for thinking and thoughts are free. It may not force anyone to any faith or doctrine or dogma. "The laws of faith and of love are superior to laws concerning temporal goods, imperial, or worldly affairs; all other laws must and shall be given their bounds by faith and by love . . . faith and love shall be the master of all laws and ruler over them all. For since all laws are directed toward faith and love, none shall be valid, nor be a law, where it runs counter to faith or love."²⁶⁷ Man's belief or unbelief is a matter of conscience, therefore the government "must let each believe as he can and will, and press none by force. For faith is a free work, to which no one can be forced. Indeed, it is a divine work in the spirit, and no external authority can either force or create it."²⁶⁸

However, since no man is by nature a Christian or pious, but all are sinners. God restrains all men, Christian and non-Christian, by means of laws. In the treatise, *Of Worldly Government*, 1523, Luther sets forth that since men must live among men on earth, all are subject to secular government, and Christians are to help maintain peace and to protect their neighbors. "Even though you

[as a Christian] do not require that your enemy be punished, your weaker neighbor will require it: you must see to his peace and the hindrance of his enemy . . . Christ says, 'resist not evil'; He does not say, 'Thou shalt not serve authority nor be subject to it.' That is, be ready to suffer all things . . . and ready to help the government, serve it and be useful to it."²⁶⁹

It would be most ideal if all princes were Christians, and all authority and wielding of it were regarded as divine service. But the word of Christ, "resist not evil" means and implies that a Christian is called upon to endure evil and injustice, and to refrain from exacting vengeance. Whosoever loves his enemy and is perfect as his Heavenly Father, does not become entangled with the law nor does he require an eye for an eye. But the Christian hinders no one, who would make use of the law and its courts. Luther asks the pertinent question: "May I use the sword in my own cause, not to seek my own, but to punish evil?" And he answers: "Such a miracle is not impossible, but very rare and perilous. . . . Samson, commanded by God to plague the Philistines . . . could have pretended it was his own cause; however, he obeyed the command not to avenge himself nor to seek his own, but to serve others and to punish the Philistines. A true Christian can only follow his example. . . . Therefore, be a Samson first and you will be able to do as he."²⁷⁰

After the Diet of Augsburg and from time to time Luther was asked to state his views concerning defense and self-defense. The question arose: May the Christian then under no circumstances resist the government, if it becomes tyrannical? Luther, as a theologian, could not advise resistance to the government. As he put it, he was no jurist and could not assume the responsibility of attempting to prove the right of the subject to such resistance. The emperor, whose authority is civil and political, rules over a free people. He does not rule nor control slaves who must obey in whatever he desires. Should he be tyrannical, the Christian may not assassinate him. No private person has this right. For the commandment says, "Thou shalt not kill." If the citizens and subjects unite in resisting the tyranny of a ruler, they may dispatch him as they would any other murderer or highwayman. But Luther returns to his constant warning. The transgressor of the Word

of God may be resisted, but disobedience should be passive. The sword belongs to the government. And even though the jurists permit revolt against injustices, the theologian must continuously bear in mind the words of Matt. 5:39 and I Peter 2:18. Let no Christian undertake anything which disregards the Word of God.²⁷¹ Let his whole resistance be the Gospel, the truth.

Luther was one of the most radical revolutionists in the history of mankind. And yet he, who overthrew what centuries had grandiosely built, passionately hated revolution. For revolution or insurgence proceeds from egotistical motives, creates chaos and disorder. Adjustment of abuses, righting wrongs must be accomplished in an orderly manner. He had to oppose the peasants finally, these self-centred rebels and communists,²⁷² because God does not look with favor upon rebellion. He does not desire that self-interest judge, pass sentence, condemn, and execute; and the rebel does just that. Rather does He desire that the Christian abstain from using violence and force on behalf of his own pride and self-seeking, and suffer. To suffer, to bear the cross are his right and prerogative, none other.²⁷³ Strongly religious motives undergird Luther's analysis. Rebellion is chaos, subversion of order in which venality, presumption, perjury, and disloyalty hold sway. More than that, rebellion is supported by fear of suffering, by weakness rather than fortitude, by self-reliance rather than confidence in God.

It is not the Christian's duty to overthrow God-ordained institutions; and the rulers must guard against tyranny, violence, force, and oppression. The true state is not a union formed by the voluntary contract of its members, and it is therefore not built on the arbitrary will of men. Instituted by the divine wisdom of God, it is designed to be the bearer and protector of law and order. This entails that those who rule have a responsibility. Rulers and magistrates are in duty bound to show mercy, to fear God, to establish churches to God's glory and to aid in their material maintenance. "Since temporal authority has become a member of the Christian body," it has not only the right, but the duty, "to provide through its earthly power for the bodily as well as for the spiritual welfare of its subjects."²⁷⁴ That is, Luther considers it the duty of the government to see that in its territory the out-

ward permanency of preaching the Gospel is made possible; but it is the responsibility of the Church itself as the invisible Church to attend to its inner establishment and perpetuation of the Word. As such it is not a temporal power. Luther would not have the Church become dependent upon the state. The jurisdiction of the state applied only to the affairs of "pure reason," to the protection of Christian teaching, to the support of divine service, schools, discipline, the intellectual and ethical nurture of its members, so that there might be citizens thoroughly schooled, sensible, honorable, well-bred.

Luther, convinced that every man, woman, and child should be able to read and write, and determined further to put the Bible into everyone's hands so that he might come to know God from the source, made it the duty of the governments in state and city to establish schools and libraries and to care for the education of their subjects. "Let the youth be taught in the books of Aristotle: *Logica, Rhetorica, Poetica* . . . and *Ciceronis Rhetorica* . . . also languages, as Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and the mathematical disciplines, history . . . These I recommend earnestly if we seriously desire a reformation. For a Christian youth and a noble people in whom Christianity resides, must be instructed and trained.²⁷⁵ At various times he adds the liberal arts and music to these. Luther conceived of education, not as a sum of useful skills, but as the unloosing and directing of the creative energies of spirit and will; and as the strengthening of these by their ordainment to the inner vision. Religion is not mere doctrine, it must become life itself, and on the foundation of Christianity must learning and personality be built. Stringent self-examination sets up standards, ideals of eternal worth, value, and good, and points to the wellsprings of all love and all power. The outer world cannot prescribe laws and rules, for man is not a thing, "*ein Ding unter Dingen*." His is the sonship of the heavenly Father, and as the son of God he lives freely unto Him.

Luther knew no definite form of government which should be contended for everywhere, and which would be fruitful of the greatest good for all. He thought it natural that governments should vary as different countries and peoples vary. Abuse of civil authority, state absolutism are impossible for the Christian. Civil

authority is hedged about by responsibility to God and man. The state is the servant of God, thus to Luther the very antithesis of the absolutism of Louis XIV. Luther's state is a divine law and order to which ruler and ruled are equally subject. Both will have to answer to the Lord of lords and the King of kings.

The patriarchal rule of pious, Christian princes, seems to be nearest Luther's conception of a desirable form of government.²⁷⁶ In the Longer Catechism the exegesis of the fourth commandment, "Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother" includes: "The same is also to be said of obedience to civil government, which is comprehended in the estate of fatherhood and extends farthest of all relations. For here the father is not one of a single family, but of as many people as he has tenants, citizens, or subjects. For through them, as through our parents, God gives us food, house and home, protection and security. Therefore, since they bear such name and title with all honor as their highest dignity, it is our duty to honor them and to esteem them great."²⁷⁷

Or again, in an interpretation of the Ten Commandments, Exodus 19 and 20, in 1528, he analyzes the function of the government as incorporated in the fourth commandment: "Therefore it is the office of the government that is shall be a father, further the well-being of all people, show kindness to them, and [see to it] that neither violence nor injustice is done to anyone; the Hebrew name of the office of government is derived from kindness. In Psalm 50 the Holy Spirit is called a princely spirit, that is, one who can do no other than show kindness, as the office of the prince should do: Christ calls them *beneficos*, gracious lord [derived] from doing good."²⁷⁸ The rulers are to be "of high, princely virtue," the "wisest among men, as were David or Hercules."²⁷⁹ Aristocratic, to be sure: the government ought to be in the hands of the superior and best, in the hands of those endowed above others with reason, integrity, and virtue.²⁸⁰

But the office of the Christian prince reveals the tragic dualism of life. Certainly a prince may and should be a Christian. But in his office as ruler he is not called a Christian, but a prince. As an individual he is a Christian, but not in his administration and office. For Luther's examination of Jesus' word not to gather treasures on earth discloses to him that a prince "insofar as he is a

Christian, instructed and obedient to the Gospel, may harm no one; he may not punish or avenge [guilt and crime], but he must forgive everyone, and whatever wrong and injustice befall him, he must endure. That is the Christian's duty. But that would hardly bring about good [secular] government. . . . Therefore he [the ruler] must say: My Christian estate is a matter between God and me. I pray that He inform me how I am to live toward Him; but over and beyond that I have another estate or office in the world in that I am a prince. . . . Your princely person must be mindful as to how to administer the government, how to maintain and protect justice and peace and to punish iniquity."²⁸¹ Here is the dualistic conflict basic in the Hebrew-Christian religion, basic in the concept of co-existent good and evil in man and the world.

Luther consigned the state to a secondary position. That is, its organization became necessary because of the inherent evil in man, be he believer or infidel. The authority of government was created by God that order be maintained, evil curbed and punished, justice promoted, and goodness safeguarded and defended. How is that to be achieved? The state promulgates laws designed for man's outward conduct. In Luther's opinion, Aristotle, Xenophon, Plato, Cicero wrote excellently about the state and set forth just and honest laws. By virtue of divine command the secular government administers the *lex naturae*, which is a part of the *lex naturae* comprehended in the Decalogue. In other words, the state has the duty to foster, teach, and educate its people in matters of morality, refinement, and culture. The state inculcates virtue and exercises discipline, as Luther clearly distinguishes, on the basis of the "natural law" implanted in men's hearts from the beginning. That is to say, by the very fact that it deals with secular affairs, its guide is, in Luther's realistic appraisal, the rationalistic conception of right and wrong analogous to the patent meaning of the Decalogue.

The perfected "natural law" is found in Christ alone. God established the kingdom of Christ in the world as the true kingdom of God, where He Himself rules in His Gospel; but "the kingdom of the world" is the "kingdom of His left hand, to which belong father, mother, emperor, king, judge, executioner, and to them the government is committed."²⁸² Subject to both realms,

the Christian lives in the world and fulfills his calling. A Christian person on the one hand, and a person of the world on the other, his true being is always the Christian person, obligated to the works of the Christian. "I must befriend and cherish the sinner, be hostile to his vice, and punish him; and yet love him with my heart. . . . I am commanded to punish in the manner Christ bids me do in Matt. 18: 15-18."²⁸³ In all things God is central and the Christian neither depends upon man nor does he seek his help in him.

Christianity exists in the world of outer reality, in the state which indirectly prepares the way for the kingdom of God. For where law and order prevail, where man's faculties are trained, developed, and strengthened, where his physical well-being is forwarded, there the realm of God thrives. Secular government makes possible that the Church be maintained in peace, it is a bulwark and defense against the enemies of Christ. In this manner the state, or rather the authority of government, serves the love of God even though it appears also as the instrument of the wrath of God, the Giver of Laws, and the Judge.

Nonetheless, even though Church and state both, directly or indirectly, aspire to the realization of the "kingdom of God," Luther's analysis clearly separated Christianity and secular authority. In this world in which sin is rampant, life is built on a deep cleavage in the very foundation of man's being; absolute good can be born of God alone, moralistic concepts of good and evil spring from reason, from "natural law." The Church inculcates piety; the state keeps peace outwardly. Each needs the other. But secular government cannot offer the grace of God and His salvation to man, and the rule of Christ does not extend to all men. Therefore Luther could not accept the idea of "Christian politics" in the monistic sense of the Roman Church or of the zealots. That is, he did not believe that the world could be ruled in every aspect of life by reference to the divine law of God. For Luther could not and did not equate rationalistic "natural law" morals with Christian ethics.

The state, come into being because of sin, could disappear again if all the world became Christian. But Luther accorded that prospect little likelihood. For, he informed the "perfectionist"

Schwenkfeld, the enthusiast, who believed in a perfected, Christian state and community, he, Luther, did not know even one single perfect Christian. How then was a political state to achieve Christian perfection in all its members? Indeed, Luther cut deeply and incisively in his analysis of the distinct functioning of Church and secular government. "The kingdom of God is the kingdom of grace and compassion . . . for in it are found utter forgiveness, forbearance, love, service, loving-kindness, peace, and joy. But worldly government is a realm of anger and austerity, for in it are found utter reproof, restraining, judgment and sentence, to constrain the wicked and to protect the pious; for this reason it possesses and wields the sword. . . . Whoever would mingle these two realms, as our false factious spirits are doing, would put anger into the kingdom of God and compassion into the kingdom of the world, and that would simply mean establishing Satan in heaven and God in hell."²⁸⁴ Therefore the Christian prince must continue loyal to his dualistic duty as Christian and ruler: "Thus these two things proceed together nicely, that you suffer evil and at the same time punish evil. . . . For yourself you will adhere to the Gospel and be directed by the Word of Christ, and gladly turn the other cheek if it be a matter of you and your cause."²⁸⁵

Though secular government accentuates this conflict, a solution is possible, realizable and effected in the realm of the ideal, in the Christian religion. Evil must be curbed, punished, the good fostered. Like St. Paul Luther believed that secular government in some measure exercises the authority of the Ruler and Judge in the world, establishing and maintaining justice, avenging evil on the one hand, and on the other dispensing the mercy and beneficence of the Father. The conflict will be resolved when all men practice Christian love, when mankind is transformed into a "community of saints" in thought, word, and deed. It is quite clear that where "justice is done and injustice suffered there is no need of court, judge, punishment, justice, or sword. Therefore the worldly sword and justice are not needed among Christians; of themselves they do what is right . . . and more than any law demands."²⁸⁶ That was Luther's ideal. Luther knew that laws are unnecessary except for the unrighteous; "if all the world were truly Christian," the compulsion of law would be superfluous, "there would be no need of king, lord, sword, or law; of what

use can they be if all have the Holy Spirit in their hearts, who teaches them and brings about that they wrong no one, love all, and cheerfully endure injustice, even death."²⁸⁷ If each citizen were a true Christian, wronged no one, loved his fellow man, lived his life according to the dictate of the Holy Spirit in his heart, the world were a paradise indeed.

Celibacy and Marriage

The Renaissance theory of conjugal love merged Christian and Greek classical conceptions, with the latter dominant. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, 1463-1494, Italian humanist and philosopher of the Renaissance, for instance, distinguished three categories in love: "heavenly love," such as the angels know, which is directed toward spiritual beauty; "human or rational love," which is the response of the senses to beauty, as beauty of face, a reflection in reality of heavenly love; the third, "animal love," which finds the source of beauty in the material body alone. Or, love might be defined as contemplative and divine; as actively human; as self-indulgent and animalistic. This latter is simply degrading lust. Whoever knows love in the true sense will be led from perception of the beauty of the body to the beauty of the soul. The expression "true love," apparently first used in the Renaissance, referred exclusively to spiritual love—called "heavenly" by Plato, and "pure love" by the Middle Ages. This divine love is directed upward to God and can be comprehended only by divine inspiration.

Having put aside the system of monasticism, the Reformation returned the priest to the natural manner of life. The vow of chastity was annulled and with it the prohibition of marriage among the clergy. Simultaneously an evaluation of marriage and family life was formulated which differed from the view held either by the Church or by the Renaissance as Pico envisaged it. The Church of Rome had never succeeded in reconciling the antithesis existing between its own two definitions of marriage; the one divine, the other human. On the one hand the estate of wedlock was consecrated by the Church in so far as it was considered a sacrament; on the other hand it was accounted sinful, satisfying the animal appetites of man, and thus forbidden the servants of the Church.

In the tract, *Concerning the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*,

1520, Luther, as previously stated, argued that the state of marriage is not a sacrament. Baptism and holy communion are. For a sacrament is a distinctly Christian ritual, a promise of God's forgiveness of sin and grace accompanied by an outer symbol, as water or bread or wine. Marriage as such existed from the beginning and is not peculiar to Christianity. But though not a sacrament in the sense of the Church of Rome, it is most certainly not designed to ensnare in carnal lust, as was taught by the Church in the vow to celibacy. Luther looked upon marriage as the first human-social institution ordained by God, the most spiritual of all estates, "instituted and blessed in paradise."²⁸⁸

The traditional description of marriage as stated by the canonists of the Roman Church had read: "marriage is the union of man and woman according to nature"; or "the union of man and woman retaining the individual habit of life." Luther found this wholly inadequate. One of his many definitions describes marriage as "the lawful union between man and woman proceeding from God and ordained to the praise of God and to the preservation and education of the progeny for the ministration of Church and state."²⁸⁹ Whereas Roman attention was focused on the word *copula*, Luther considered marriage an institution of God and consecrated to Him. For whatever God ordains is in itself good.

However, the implications and facets of this God-consecrated institution among men are varied and many. At one time Luther had written: "Not as if I were not aware of my flesh and nature, since I am neither wood nor stone; however, I am not even remotely thinking of marriage."²⁹⁰ And yet in 1525, at forty-two, he married Katharina von Bora, a former nun, plain in person, no heroine of romance, but a dependable, sensible *Hausfrau*. The words written shortly after his marriage sound almost prosaic: "I am neither in love nor passionately infatuated, but I treasure my wife."²⁹¹ Why then did he marry? Thousands were looking to him for guidance, by precept or example. And he resolved to marry, not because he hoped for personal happiness, but because he had to protest in deed as well as in word against the doctrine of celibacy, productive of widespread immorality among the clergy. "I did not take a wife because I thought to live long; but because I suspect my end is near, for I perceive that now the

masses of people together with the princes are raging against me: [I entered wedlock] that my doctrine [that marriage is a God-pleasing state for all], which may be suppressed again after my death, be bequeathed to the weak, confirmed by my own example."²⁹² His conviction had to be proved in deed before his death, so that he might "glorify marriage and attest the scorn for the infamy of the vile unchastity and immorality prevalent in the papacy."²⁹³ At no time were his enemies as numerous and as aroused as in 1525; the judgment he pronounced against both prince and peasant had provoked a most formidable agitation against him. Early in June, 1525, he informed his future brother-in-law: "It is my intention before departing from this life to enter the state of wedlock; this I consider demanded by God."²⁹⁴ And ten days later: "Lords, priests, peasants, all are against me and threaten me with death. Very well. . . . I shall accommodate myself so that I may be found in the state instituted by God before my end; and, as far as I am able, retain nothing of my former monastic life."²⁹⁵ In the midst of the carnage of the Peasants' Revolt, expecting death momentarily, he determined to leave an incontestable testimony and approval of an institution he held sacred.

Tirelessly he praised celibacy. "To whomever is given the gift and grace to live chastely outside wedlock, let him thank God."²⁹⁶ Celibacy is justified indeed and to be chosen where God has given the grace of continence: "It is well not to marry unless it becomes necessary: and it becomes necessary where God has not bestowed the singularly noble gift of chastity."²⁹⁷ However, let each do as he can and as he feels God has given him to do. Luther esteemed celibacy in the purity of its intent. However, he saw what havoc is wrought among priest, monk, and nun. Also, by degrees, he came to recognize monasticism as unethical in essence. For the monk naively believed that by dedicating his life to God he could move his Lord and Master to grant him special favors. By his orisons, his fasting, his fleeing the world—that he was fleeing from his responsibility to the world into which God had placed him, did not occur to him—the monk presumed to bribe God to bestow choice blessings upon him, to set him apart from his fellow Christians, his inferiors. Thus the monk elevated himself to a position beside God, trusted in himself and his merit and depre-

ciated the salvation won in Christ and His grace. Mercenary self-seeking was here substituted for Christian ethical striving. In sum, the monastery was not the holy place Luther had hoped to find when he entered it. Among other things it fostered its own seven deadly sins, as he later enumerated them: covetousness, lasciviousness, uncleanness, hate, envy, idleness, and an aversion for the service of God.

Monasticism abused natural instincts and ethics in Luther's view, because man's nature rejects and rebels against unnatural vows. Every ethical deed requires volition, freedom, fervor, and devotion to the good. Voluntary, joyous, trusting surrender to God constitutes a Christian ethical life. Not force, but free choice and decision. "Over and over God proclaims in Scriptures that He will not accept forced service and that no one shall be His, except it be in joy and love. I shall say it a hundred thousand times: God wants no forced service."²⁹⁸

Marriage is a noble estate and requires nobility of character in both husband and wife. "In my view the husband is obliged to regard his wife as a Christian and as an instrument of God. Both must observe mutual consideration and each bestow honor upon the other. Thus will marriage afford peace and love. Wherever this art is wanting, boredom and aversion alone hold sway."²⁹⁹ Monogamy was self-evident for Luther. If Jacob was wed to two wives, first to Leah, then to Rachel, this was done in "accordance with the custom of the land . . . therefore this was not wrong nor criminal. . . . However, it is no longer customary, and God does not command it, therefore there is no reason for it, and it should be abandoned."³⁰⁰

Marriage should be built on communion of spirit; mutual love and a trusting, joyous faith in God assure a personal life abundantly blessed. Conjugal felicity, God-implanted, is good and sweet. A Christian looks upon his mate in unprompted delight and rejoices: "Behold this one, God's finest creature, Christ gave to me; unto Him be praise and honor!"³⁰¹ Knowing that sanctity inheres in wedlock, the wedded one may yield to all the good it connotes. It is his to enjoy with thankful heart. The impulse to natural love, though no longer in the state of its original purity, derives from God; but it is an external, "temporal, secular thing."³⁰²

Where a Christian is married to a pagan, the marriage may stand. Does one not “find Christians whose unbelief is worse” than that of non-Christians? Besides, “a heathen is as much a man or woman as St. Peter, St. Paul, and Santa Lucia.” And “even as I am able to eat, drink, sleep, walk, ride, trade, speak, and deal with a heathen, a Jew, a Turk, or a heretic: in like manner may I wed one and remain wedded.”³⁰³ The marriage between Christian and non-Christian may be maintained “as long as the non-Christian is content and desires to stay with his spouse and the Christian spouse is permitted to conduct himself as becomes a Christian. Marriage . . . need not be dissolved because of the piety or wickedness of either spouse. Should the non-Christian, however, refuse to let his mate be a Christian or live as one, . . . then were it time to obey literally the decree of Christ: ‘Whosoever shall love wife or child more than me, he is not worthy of me.’ Then it is a matter for divorce.”³⁰⁴

The Christian sanctifies whatever he touches, to him “the whole world is but a sanctuary, purity, sheer benefit, and blessing.”³⁰⁵ Above all, each is to leave untouched and to tolerate the faith of the other, and to commit it all into the hands of God. No one shall be forced or urged to any faith, but know that God will care for him and nurture him in grace. In short, of whatever estate, the Christian knows that the Father loves all, He loves Saturn, the sun, and the moon equally well, no matter how unlike their brilliance. In whatever state, the one thing needful is to continue in the fear and love of God, and His bountiful blessings will assuredly not be withheld.

In his *Table Talks*, in letters, in his “Sermon on Wedded Life,”³⁰⁶ 1522, Luther considered problems involved in marriage. Holy matrimony is an honorable estate instituted by God: “the high grace and gift of God.”³⁰⁷ “Marriage is the most excellent estate, for it is instituted by Him and maintained by Him.”³⁰⁸ It is ordained for the purpose of establishing a family, in which the children are brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, to His praise and glory, in Christian propriety and honorable conduct. “It is the most distinguished estate on earth . . . for the sake of mankind, to father children.”³⁰⁹ The family is a sacred institution, a blessing to be guarded and fostered in trustful thankfulness to God. The parents’ responsibility is a glorious one. “The

best of all . . . and for which sake much must be endured and done, is that God bestows the fruits of marriage and commands that the children be brought up to serve Him. That is the noblest and most worthy deed on earth, for nothing delights God more than that souls be saved."³¹⁰

Before the science of botany was formulated Luther had divined the law of natural life, animal and vegetable, and often made statements such as, "The principle of marriage runs through all creation; flowers as well as animals are male and female." A garden could call forth a burst of eloquence as beautiful as a gem of poetry. The shoots, budgeoning and swelling, image the resurrection of the dead, and the humblest floweret shows forth the hand of the Almighty and His infinite goodness. And he granted similar deference to motherhood. Most assuredly the Holy Spirit was speaking through Adam when he called his wife Eva, which is mother. Adam did not say woman, Luther noted, but mother, and added, "of 'all living." For that is the crown of woman that she be compassionate, endowed with loving-kindness, and ready to suffer and sacrifice.

In the institution of matrimony God gave orderly direction and limitation to the blind procreative urge in man, which through the fall into sin had become adulterated and debased. Marriage was thus ordained as a "medicine against sin" and a hindrance to unchastity. "Even if this purpose [procreation of children] were not implicit in marriage, one must know, that it is a remedy against sin and hinders vice";³¹¹ "it directs and restrains carnal desire."³¹² This does not mean that marriage is to be undertaken to satisfy man's carnal appetites, but is to be entered upon reverently and in the fear of God. Since marriage "is not a natural thing, but the gift of God,"³¹³ "it ought in all justice to be called the spiritual estate, indeed, a right heavenly, spiritual, and divine estate, because by its very nature it is of such temper, that it urges, drives, and compels man into innermost, exalted, divine being, namely to faith . . . which is spirit and makes spiritual whatever is in man, both inwardly and outwardly."³¹⁴

Wedlock was also ordained for the mutual help and comfort and enjoyment, which each ought to have in the other, in prosperity, in adversity. Each is to serve the other, attend to the needs

and benefits of goods, honor, body, and soul. Husband and wife are to love each other and to become one. Marriage, this gift of God, is the "sweetest, loveliest, most chaste life, superior to all celibacy . . . if it turns out well; however, it is hell itself, if it turns out badly."³¹⁵ To avoid this latter catastrophe, marriage must be a voluntary and happy contract between man and woman. "No one shall be forced to marriage, but it shall be for each a matter of free choice and left to his conscience . . . for no one can be persuaded or forced to conjugal love."³¹⁶

Much as he extolled celibacy, an estate in which he spent two-thirds of his life, he praised the ideal marriage without reservation, despite all burdens and hardships it might entail. "A wife is the most precious treasure, given by God; she is virtuous, loyal, and keeps faith. . . . It is God's supreme grace when husband and wife love each other sincerely and forever and ever."³¹⁷ Or again, "There is no sweeter, kindlier, more gracious relation, companionship, and association than a happy marriage."³¹⁸ Marriage is a symbol of the mystical union that obtains between Christ and His bride. It is "a holy symbol of a supreme, most sacred, worthy and noble thing . . . that is, the union of the divine and human nature in Christ. Even as man and woman are one when united in marriage: even thus God and mankind are One in Christ; Christ and Christendom one Body."³¹⁹ Clothed in bridal robes, Christians live in faith in Christ, know themselves in the Father's hands, love their fellow men and become Christlike servants one to the other.

In the beginning of his marriage Luther had written that he was not ardently in love with his wife, "but I esteem and hold her dear."³²⁰ Cool words they were. However soon a genial warmth, a recognition of the grace which fashioned his life expanded his heart in thankfulness. And now marriage was given more effective sanction and motive than it had previously possessed: he rejoiced that he had found so true a companion in "Käthe," that with her his life was sweet and blessed. In the next year, 1526, he could write that he "would not exchange his poverty for all the wealth of Croesus, for Käthe suits me more admirably than I had ever dared hope."³²¹ In later *Table Talks* he was certain he would not exchange her for all of France or Venice. Thus his marriage, begun with respect, ended in a steady affection.

A new world dawned for him in his family, in the love of his own kindred with its own undefiled naturalness, in the absorption in its purposes, its devotion, care, its warm joyousness. A wholesome, ingenuous affinity bound him to his family. His manner and relations with his children were singularly beautiful. In recollection of his own harsh and rigid childhood, he was especially gentle with them. This is perhaps best illustrated in the letter he wrote his four-year old son, "*den herzlichsten Sohn Hänschen*," in 1530. In pleasing simplicity he tells him of a pretty, delightful, gay garden where there are many children who are wearing charming golden robes, and who gather apples, pears, cherries, apricots, and plums under the trees. There is a beautiful meadow arranged for dance and play, "there I saw hanging golden whistles and drums and silver crossbows." To this place Hänschen may also come—this the owner of the garden told him—if he gladly learns and prays and is kind and good. "Therefore, dear Hänschen, learn and pray cheerfully, and tell Lippus and Justus, too, that they learn and pray, and together you will come to this garden."³²² Here are the two words, so potent in the sixteenth century: "learn and pray" — humanistic effort and Christian faith!

All social estates arise from marriage. Obedience to parents should condition the children for assumption of ethical responsibility, establishment of good social customs, good government in town and in the land. All members of the household, maids, servants, employees are thought of as belonging to a patriarchy, brought up and taught in the fear and love of God, in chastity, propriety, and honor. Lived in this manner, family life is "the sweetest, loveliest, and most chaste life on earth."³²³

REBIRTH IN CHRIST SANCTIFIES LIFE

The Christian, living in this world, dedicates his natural, physical, and spiritual gifts to the universal purposes of Christian love. To Luther's mind each individual has a definite position, commanded and summoned thereto by God, and in it he uses his God-given talents. No matter how lowly or exalted his station, or how humble or mean the work to be done, the Christian sanctifies it by the Word and faith, and "whatever he does is a divine service and an offering brought unto Him."³²⁴ Insofar as it is the fruit of

faith the outer deed is also spiritual. For "I am but the workshop wherein He works."³²⁵ Christians are children of God without distinction. "There is but one Christian estate even as there is but one manner of natural creation among men."³²⁶ The life of the Christian, his deeds, are correlated to the divine commandments and spring from faith. In his *Sermon on Good Works*³²⁷ Luther points out that the indwelling Holy Spirit, along with faith and love belong together; that the deeds of the believer are acceptable unto God not because of the inherent worth of the deed, but because it is done in faith. And faith and trust make it precious in the sight of God. A Christian, whose life is built on "trust in God, knows all things, is able in all things, is confident in all things needing to be done, does all things gladly and willingly . . . because it is a joy to please God."³²⁸ A personal, pure joy serves God selflessly, simply in the thought of pleasing Him. Faith of itself serves others, abandons care and anxiety. Whatever is done in this faith is a good work, and if it were no more than picking up a wisp of straw.³²⁹ And so the handiwork of the believer is a good work, as are his eating, drinking, sleeping. Faith is not idle, and even outward idleness may be engaged upon in the exercise of faith. There is no activity, however mean, that is not made priceless in faith, and none so excellent that, lacking faith, is not made worthless. For "everything that does not proceed from faith is sin."³²⁹

Martin Luther suffered more deeply than all others in the struggle to overcome the chaos of his age and to give new form to every aspect of life. He found an unfailing stay amid the confusion about him and drew strength from it to establish an enduring order of life. Luther's *Weltanschauung* may be called dualistic, but not in the sense of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Medieval thought stressed particularly the salvation of the soul, the Renaissance was primarily engaged in exploring this present world. Luther's struggle was first and foremost directed toward a gracious God who would accept him in his totality; but it also took cognizance of this world and recognized a duty toward it.

In Luther's experience of Christianity, the reborn Christian does not flee the world, but rather does his faith bestow a benediction upon it, upon the very corporeality of it, through his activity in it. Just as the external man, "flesh," "nature," is transformed by the

rebirth of the inner man in spirit, so are outer relations in this world transformed and formed by the believing Christian. Certainly the transfiguration of all outward things through the spirit must always remain imperfect in time. For in Luther's theology the battle between "spirit" and "nature" continues throughout life. The Christian does not achieve perfection in this world; but his imperfection does not lead to despair, since it can not harm the inwardly reborn Christian. In this view Luther differed from the Spiritualists and Anabaptists, who considered themselves free as well as perfect through the spirit.

By assigning to the Christian a personal relation to the Absolute, to God, Luther introduced a new age. To be sure, the Renaissance helped overcome medieval collectivism and fostered the development of individual dignity. But Luther's doctrine concerning man's faith in God was the first to establish a definite and unswerving position based on the principle of the autonomy of the individual conscience over and against a collectivistic conscience resting upon hierarchical solicitation and demand. Luther's faith is autonomous only in the individual's relation to a collective society and toward human precepts and statutes, but not in relation to God. Here the Christian's conscience is determined and bound in God, in Christ, in the Word. The Bible is the only proof of the correctness of a decision of conscience. Luther granted no other revelation except that of the Word.

This surrender to the Word and being bound to it brought about that Luther's doctrine of faith remained a religious experience in the individual; and this same doctrine compelled him to found a new Church and a new social order. Since Luther comprehended man in his totality, he necessarily included in this comprehension the whole of man's experiences, whether in spiritual or corporeal form, and all of these stood in need of transformation. There was on the one hand the reorganization of the Church built on the concept of the priesthood of every member; on the other it was essential that the heart and mind of organized society be changed, and this he accomplished by exalting and consecrating marriage, the family, profession, economic problems, civil authority, education. Social relations as well as political relations were raised through the Reformation to institutions of divine origin,

whose stewardship in the hands of the Christians must be dedicated to God with the single aim of perpetuating His majesty inherent in law and order.

The humble but exalted faith of the former Roman priest became effective far beyond his own personal life through his new conception of man, or, as it is often called, through his anthropology, and by reason of his new conception of society, or his new sociology. His anthropology was erected on the foundation of the New Testament, and his sociology on the Bible as the revelation of God's will. He distinguished between man the creature and man reborn in Christ, that is, man according to the flesh and man according to the renewed spirit, or between the outer and the inner man. This differentiation between man according to the flesh and man in the spirit differs completely from the contrast of the sentient-rational nature of man which is of antique-Greek origin, and to which Erasmus subscribed. This distinction, the dualism of "nature," or the senses, in conflict with the spirit, is wholly at variance with Luther's conception.

For Luther conceived of man in his wholeness. In this wholeness, in this totality he must appear before God: body, senses, urges, intellect, reason, mind, will, soul. The sum of all of this makes man, the creature, man according to the flesh. Flesh was to Luther everything that is born of the flesh, all of man with body and soul, with mind and all senses. Outer man, man in the flesh, is man in his totality, insofar as he lives in sin. And sin is not synonymous with single deeds, but is the existential state of man, the condition of sinfulness. Man is by nature totally depraved, he is disinclined to the good, inclined to evil. He is bound, captive to evil. The inner man, man in the spirit, is man saved in Christ, saved in his totality as a creature, man in the state of grace, the free Christian man. In grace he is free and able to do all things in Christ, even though he must constantly struggle against relapse into bondage. This contrast was sharply defined and maintained throughout in Luther's religious philosophy. In this there could be no compromise. Luther's conception of faith could never have triumphed so magnificently, had he not relentlessly rejected the efforts and merits of "natural man," and bestowed his unreserved sanction upon man reborn into the state of grace.

He maintained that every effort of the creature to save himself and the world by his own strength and achievement, through good works, is hopeless. The hopelessness of man's efforts, the despair to which this hopelessness leads, constitutes the indispensable prerequisite for grace and salvation. Salvation is brought about through faith on the part of man, through grace on the part of God. But all faith is a divine work within man, so that he is born anew in God, and heart and mind and all energies are transformed in the Holy Spirit.

No man can earn his own salvation, but must receive it as a free gift of God; and the Christian's spontaneous thankfulness characterizes and sanctifies his deeds in this world, and, though imperfect still, whatever he does is blessed. Faith and the love that flows from it assure inner peace and outer order no matter how chaotic and perplexing the world may appear. The believer never loses the power to solve every problem and to meet every situation he faces, for he has the one infallible guide: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."³³⁰ Life is thus made a divine service in all its thoughts, desires, and deeds.

CHAPTER V

**THE REFORMATION —
MARTIN LUTHER**

PART TWO

THE RELATION OF GOD TO MAN
Solution in the Realm of Spirit
(Continued)

THE BIBLE

None too accurate in distinguishing between the canonical and apocryphal books of the Bible, the Roman Church in Luther's day habitually granted equal recognition to the books of the Bible and those of the Church Fathers. Early in the history of Christianity the Greek Bible of the Church containing the New Testament Scriptures subjoined to these the Hebrew writings, that is, the books of the Old Testament and those known as apocryphal. According to legend, the Greek translation of the Hebrew texts was made at Alexandria in seventy-two days by seventy-two learned Jews from Jerusalem, six from each tribe, at the command of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 270 B. C. The Jews, Greek-speaking, and the Church accepted this translation as divinely inspired. Therewith the infallibility of the authority of the Greek translation of the Old Testament produced by "the Seventy" and called the Septuagint was established. Modern critics believe it was the work not only of different hands, but made at varying times between 280 and 130 B. C. However that may be, the Hellenistic (Alexandrine) idiom, in which the Septuagint was written, affected the diction of the New Testament to a marked degree. The Septuagint became the source of a large part of the religious and theological vocabulary not only of the Greek Fathers, but, through the Old Latin version and its influence on the Vulgate, of the Latin Fathers also. Its mode of expression and its diction were carried down into the languages of all Western nations.

Eager to possess every word of God, the early Church had thus collected all Hebrew religious books and added them to the Bible; and in so doing it was not at all disturbed by the fact

that the Jews themselves did not count the apocryphal books a part of the narrower category of Sacred Scriptures. Why, asked the Church, should the Proverbs of Solomon, for instance, be divinely inspired, and the Proverbs of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus) be nothing more than profane wisdom?

Tradition soon converted the high esteem for these Jewish writings into acceptance and sanctification, and the Christian Bible came to include the Jewish books, whether or not the Jewish canon admitted them. The prevalent attitude of the Church was that the ancient landmarks which those gone before had set ought neither to be tampered with nor altered. Tradition demands respect. And so the translations of the Jewish writings, made from the Greek and put into Latin, included as a matter of course the books which the Church had been approving, but which the synagogue rejected as secular.

In the early fifth century Jerome undertook a new Latin translation of the Hebrew Bible. This contained the books corresponding to the Protestant Old Testament. He expressly excluded all other books from canonical Scriptures: "Whatever is not included in this list is to be classed as apocrypha." The term "apocrypha," literally, "secret or esoteric writings," had been employed to characterize books of heretical sects, writings which the Church had repudiated as uninspired and even harmful. Jerome now applied this same word to books which the Church had always regarded as godly and edifying. However, he did not unwaveringly maintain this position and the Jewish Bible did not become the canon of the Christian Church. Another Church Father, St. Augustine, supported the ecclesiastical tradition; he included with the canonical books of the Old Testament Judith, Tobit, the two books of the Maccabees, Ecclesiasticus, and Wisdom of Solomon. Throughout the Middle Ages authors repeated the conflicting utterances of the Church Fathers concerning the canon. In practice, the Bible, in Greek or Latin, included in the Old Testament all books without distinction: the "canonical" and the "ecclesiastical." Critical voices were heard now and then, but the usage of the Church carried more weight than any scholarly opinion.

With the Reformation this question assumed new significance.

Which books are inspired Scripture, clothed with divine authority; which books most truly "practice Christ"? Neither tradition nor the uncertain attitude of the Roman Church afforded an answer. The central core, the Gospel of the New Testament, alone could constitute the authority. To the Jews, St. Paul had said, were committed the oracles of God; and Jesus and the apostles appealed to and quoted Jewish Scriptures. Luther, therefore, in his translation of the Bible consistently separated the books of the Jewish canon from the ecclesiastical books accepted by the Roman Church. In his first complete German edition, 1534, the "uncanonical" books — Judith, Wisdom, Tobit, Sirach, Baruch, the two Maccabees, the story of Susanna, originally composed in Greek, not in Hebrew, The Prayer of Manasseh — were placed between the Old Testament and the New Testament, with this inscription: "Apocrypha: that is, books that are not to be equally esteemed with Holy Scriptures, but are nevertheless profitable and good to read." They establish no doctrine and are no authority in the Church. The other Protestant versions, on the Continent and in England, followed this example.

In opposition to this Protestant position, which limits the Old Testament to the books of the Hebrew Bible, the Roman Church, in the fourth session of the Council of Trent, 1546, framed a "Decree concerning Scriptures," in which the "apocryphal" books are included with the rest. "If any man does not accept as sacred and canonical these books, entire, with all their parts, as they have been read customarily in the Catholic Church and are contained in the ancient common Latin edition . . . let him be anathema!" This decree not only affirmed that all books in question are Holy and Canonical Scriptures, but seems to put them all in one class and to ignore the ancient distinction between the books of the Jewish Bible and the ecclesiastical books. By this same edict, furthermore, the "Holy Mother Church" claimed the sole right and sole proficiency in exegesis.

The Word of God

Holy Writ, the Scriptures of the Holy Spirit, were to Luther the Word of God, the Word of Promise, whose truth is authenticated by the verity of God Himself. In his day the inspired,

divine origin of the Bible was generally acknowledged. Yet Luther did not declare the Word of God and the Bible to be of one and the same identity. He was not a Biblicist in the sense that his faith was founded on a Bible whose every single word was inspired by the Holy Ghost. His genius was too discerning, his observations too keen, to indulge such generalizing judgment. He experienced the holiness and the mystery, the miraculous release its inexhaustible riches afford, and he knew the Holy Spirit is creative in that Word which discovers the Triune God and God in Christ.

The Word of God proclaims the one invariable truth: "Christ, the Son of God, is our Saviour."¹ This is Luther's belief. The message of the Gospel was preached before the foundation of the world, and it alone confers validity upon the Bible. The Word makes known and interprets the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ, an event in time, in history; and this same Word, which is beyond all time, makes this occurrence fruitful for us by the Holy Spirit, who bestows the power of this happening upon us. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are realities in themselves, but they are made a reality "for me" in the Word.

In the Word the hidden and merciful God, the incomprehensible, eternal God became reality in time, the Messiah proclaimed by the Old Testament and the New Testament became a personal-historical occurrence. But only as the Holy Spirit uses the Word to present Christ the Saviour to us, the Logos incarnate, God Himself in concrete form, does the Word become the living Word of God. Through Him the outward Word becomes the inner Word. He presents the risen Christ as a redeeming reality for us. By the Holy Spirit the past bestows its gift upon the present. Where the Holy Spirit is not, there the Word is but a letter, law, a portrayal of Christ, and His earthly life is mere history. The focus of the Word of God therefore, as revealed by the Holy Spirit, is the risen, living Christ.

God speaks the Word in a threefold manner: in His promises made by the prophets; in the hidden, yet fulfilled revelation in His Son; in His eternal glory the Father will speak Words no longer veiled in mystery. The Word of the prophets was

transformed into historical and concrete form in Christ and in Him the Holy Spirit was translated from abstraction into actual history. The Word of God, that is, God's own interpretation and testimony to eternal things, became flesh in Christ; the meaning of the Eternal assumed form; the Eternal became event and history; in the death and resurrection of Christ the flesh was overcome and the Spirit exalted.

And this fact in history becomes significant for mankind only by the proclamation of the work of Christ on earth. The "crucifixion from eternity" would avail us nothing had it not been made known to us by the Word, an "external sign." The event of the Incarnation would not help us, had it not become the Gospel which made known to us why God became man. And the Father, in order that He might reveal His love for us, created the Word as the instrument of His revelation, an instrument appropriate to our thinking and feeling, "not according to the actual being and nature of God." He, the omnipotent and omnipresent, the all-creating God wills to be found in His Word. This is clear to Luther. "Although He is everywhere in all creatures, and I may find Him in stone, in fire, in the water, or in a rope . . . , He does not desire that I seek Him outside the Word and cast myself into the fire or water or hang myself on the rope; He is everywhere, but He does not wish that you grope after Him everywhere. But where the Word is, there grope after Him, or you will not seize Him. Elsewise you will tempt God and commit idolatry. Therefore He set before us a certain manner, how and where we are to seek and find Him, namely in the Word."² In this manner alone can its benison be transmitted to all. "If God had let Christ die and rise again from the dead and had let such a work remain hidden and had not proclaimed it by the Word, whom would it profit?"³ For surely this sublime work of salvation is inaccessible to the human mind and its reality can not be known except by the Word of revelation. "Christ on the cross with all His suffering and death is of no avail even if it is recognized and contemplated in the most intense, fervent, and inward manner. . . . There must be yet one other thing. And that is? the Word, the Word, the Word . . . the Word accomplishes it; for even though

Christ had been given for us and been crucified a thousand times, it were in vain, if the Word had not come to dispense it, to give it to me and say, this is yours."⁴

The death of Christ is a fact, an historical fact wrought by God. But the proclamation of its "fruit," forgiveness of sin, is made in the Word, in the sacrament. "If I wish my sins to be forgiven, I ought not to run to the cross, for there I shall not find [forgiveness] granted. Also, I need not concentrate on the suffering of Christ, as Carlstadt foolishly fabulates, for there I shall not find it; but [I must go] to the sacrament or to the Gospel. There do I find the Word, which dispenses, presents, offers, and gives to me the forgiveness won on the cross."⁵ It is the Word that imparts the strength and the worth of this happening beyond all time. God revealed Himself in Christ "for me," that the "use" and "fruit" of this revelation be realized in me. And the Word remains His Word whether or not it is accepted. It creates grace wherever it enters; judgment, wherever it encounters impenitence and obduracy.

Indeed, Christ reveals the "hidden God," who confronts us with our guilt and spreads before us the meaninglessness and lostness of life. He is the Word, the living Word. In Him alone is salvation. He, who is personally, in being, *substantialiter*, *realiter*, *essentialiter* God Himself, in whom is the whole of the Godhead in concreteness, is eternal activity. Therefore everything He says is deed, everything He reveals is creation. And this Christ, God and Man, is present in the Word, in His supernatural, almighty, numinous power. Finding Him makes known to us "that the Word of God pertains unto the glory of God, Spirit, Christ, grace, eternal life, death, sin, all things. . . ."⁶

Therefore the Word, which is the "spiritual body of Christ" must have divine-human form; it must be of the Spirit, it must have outer form. For the Word, written into the heart of the believer by the Holy Spirit, transforms the eternal Word of creation, which is the Son of God, into the Word become flesh "for us." "Then is He there for you, when He adds His Word and ties Himself thereto and speaks: Here shall you find me . . ."⁷ Christ lives and has His being in the Word; only in direct oneness with Him is it the Word.

And so it comes about "that nothing can be so corporeal, so of the flesh or so external, it becomes spiritual when en clothed in the Word and faith."⁸ In Luther's conception the inward becomes outward, the spiritual becomes body in the actuality of the Spirit. The enthusiasts may think "that nothing can be spiritual if it is corporeal. . . . But the opposite is in fact true: the Spirit can not be with us except in bodily things, as in the Word, water, the body of Christ and in His saints on earth."⁹ The enthusiasts insisted that all corporeal matter is dissolved in spirit, while Luther observed that God's manner is precisely the reverse. Outer things deprived of the Word of God are impotent; comprehended in the Word of God, however, they are salvation. All spiritual things need the concrete for proclamation and realization. Whatever proceeds from the Holy Spirit is Spirit, no matter how corporeal it may appear.

Through the Word and through faith any outer act commanded by God is spiritual. "And if God put His Word into a wisp of straw I should recognize that my salvation is present in the wisp; not because of the wisp, but because of the Word. For where the Word is there is God."¹⁰ However corporeal, external, and of the flesh a thing may be, it becomes spiritual when the Word and faith are added. Thus, for instance, in the Holy Supper: the eating is both spiritual and of the body, for the heart lays hold of the Word. Even as Christ was born spiritually-bodily, thus we eat and drink spiritually-bodily. A miracle, to be sure. But thus God willed it. His reason can not be fathomed. Through the Word, through faith, then, the historical fact of reconciliation and redemption becomes a reality.

It is the eternal miracle, omnipotence, might, majesty, and glory of the Father, that the living, risen Christ, resurrected from death on earth is in reality present in the Word. In His humanity alone can Christ come to us as a gift from the Father, and by means of the Word alone can the Holy Ghost give us the eternal gift of salvation. By His proclamation of the Incarnation of the Son of God made to all mankind after the resurrection of Christ was Christ glorified. Not the miracle of the resurrection as such constitutes His glorification. Christ was actually exalted and glorified among men by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Thus the glorification of Christ comes to pass by the message of the Gospel, and the resurrection of Christ and the enlightenment by the Holy Spirit can not be separated. This was to Luther the meaning of the Word of God, consummated and perfected, spiritual in its being, hence, still hidden. It can have significance only for the captive intellect and the mind, humbly surrendered in faith.

Thus, according to Luther, the Bible, a complete whole, revolves around the one center, Christ Jesus, through whom "a merciful God" is made accessible. If I, a sinner, have become a child of God through Him, then I know the Bible to be God's Word. However, since I do not know with the same certainty whether every single book and every single word in the Bible is God's Word, its central teaching must be the standard of judgment: if the book accords with the teaching of the Gospel, it is God's Word. "All holy books preach and practice Christ."¹¹ Luther frankly admitted that he could not explain this or that passage in the Bible; that he could not resolve this or that apparent contradiction between two passages. "Many passages in Holy Scriptures are contradictory according to the letter, but in essence there is complete agreement. . . . What is the nature of man except *antilogiae* or contradiction, until the substance be presented?"¹² As a matter of fact, "contrariety in Holy Writ need not trouble us too much . . . for the central article of Christian faith is not contradicted. All evangelists agree that Christ died for our sins; though as to His deeds and miracles they do not follow the identical sequence. . . . this neither denies nor demolishes our faith."¹³ The evangelists, in recording the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ, were not too attentive to order and succession; but they were passionately compelled by the power and effective application of these historical events. Therefore they concentrated on the "fruit" of the Gospel. In like manner does God concentrate on its meaning for our faith and our salvation.

The Law is the content of all Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament which demand, "Be ye perfect." The Law in the Holy Spirit demands perfection. The Law demands, is, and will accept nothing less than the Good, Holiness in absolute-

ness. The Gospel is all the Scriptures, including the Old Testament and Moses, which offer fulfillment of the Law's demand, which bring Christ the Lord to us. For Christ is the content of the Law and of the Gospel. The Law demands what Christ is. The Gospel in mercy bestows life, gives us Christ as a gift.

Only when the Holy Spirit inheres in it is Holy Writ the living and saving Word of God. The Holy Spirit is the Majesty of God, is His eternal Glory, His Holiness, beyond and above all ends of the world and all finite form. But as the Spirit sent to reveal and make present the risen Christ in us, He is bound to the Word. Therefore Luther so tirelessly insisted on the sovereignty of the Spirit and the insufficiency of the outward Word. For only as the bearer of the actual presence of Christ is the Word the Word of God. Apart from the Holy Spirit, apart from Christ, it is but a letter.

As law outside the Holy Spirit, as a letter, the Word contains little more than the natural law "written in every man's heart." In its bare logic it presents Christ as a pattern to be imitated and persuades man to rely upon his own resources in following Christ as an example. The love and devotion demanded by Christ the model hardly exceeds the demand made by natural law. Knowledge of the historic Jesus of Nazareth in itself is but "fanciful ignorance of Him," and the Word remains an outward word.

Where the letter of the Word alone is followed, Christ is not understood in His miraculousness and mystery. Christian faith requires more than the *imitatio* devotion which, in the Middle Ages, so fervently supported meditation upon the *vita Christi* as a way to faith and a God-fearing life. Imitation of the words and works of Christ in pursuit of the ideal of moral perfection must in the end, according to Luther, lead to despair. Certainly Christ, the Son of God, does exemplify the uniqueness and singularity of a life in faith. He is our Salvation, and most assuredly, the example of the idea of our salvation, but only in the sense of an expression of faith. A piety which assumes that faith is identical with the *imitatio Christi* devotion, proffers no greater benefit than the imitation of the life of any saint. The outward manner of life does not make the Christian, but the

believer of necessity lives a Christlike life because he is like Him. Imitation does not make the child of God, but a child of God takes on His image.

Luther did not think of the presence of Christ in the Word as an ideal, conceptional presence. If "His presence" simply means that His image is presented as an ideal to be heeded in matters of morals, ethics, or religion, then His presence in the Word is no miracle. Human reason can readily accept or reject Him as a model or guide, and any solicitation for help from God or the Holy Spirit is made wholly superfluous. In other words, if nothing more than a "fancied," perfect, supremely excellent, and ideal presence and portrait of Christ in the Word be required, as taught by the intellectualists and humanists, then Luther knew the work of the Holy Spirit was not needed. Where an ethical or intellectual spiritualism is substituted for the concrete actuality of religion and faith, a purely rational doctrine of the means of grace suffices. For here the Word is thought of as imbued with a metaphysical power proceeding from God.

Luther disagreed with this view, for to him the Word is the bearer of God's concrete act of revelation. In the Word God is actually, really present in His sovereign majesty and love. To be sure, and Luther made this statement over and over: "His Word does not circumscribe the Being of God, but He retained for Himself a free being beyond all things."¹⁴ Nonetheless, when the presence of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit is real and actual, as Luther understood it, then this presence is a divine miracle. And it is the burden of our constant prayer that He may be present in the Word for us, that His kingdom may come to us; that the reality of the Word, its message, its promise, the gift of God to us, be fulfilled in us. And we pray because the promise and its fulfillment, the prayer and its answer are in the Word as surely as the real Christ is present in the Word and in the faith in the message it bears. The fulfillment is certain the very moment the promise is accepted, the prayer is answered the very moment it is uttered.

Luther thus forsook the allegorical exegesis in vogue in the Roman Church. This method of analysis interpreted the outer, factual story as representing an abstract truth, or abstract ideas

were represented by means of concrete images. The literal meaning of a word was thus translated into an idealizing, spiritualized abstraction. Luther resorted less and less to this method of obeying rational laws of logic in matters too contrary to reason, and turned more and more to his own conception of the "hidden" God, who, he came to see, wishes to be taken literally precisely in the incomprehensibility of His acting and speaking. The fact that the Word of God is contrary to all reason, paradoxical, that the Gospel offends human logic and reasoning, was to Luther a sign of its divine truth. He was certain therefore that the Word of God is to be understood literally, and not as an idealized abstraction. His method required grammatical understanding of the word, and its analysis was built on an unshakeable confidence and belief in the creativity, the indestructible power and fruitfulness inherent in the Word. Every event, every word, he found, has its own meaning "in the Spirit," and in his unmatched discernment and divination he sought it out. This spiritual interpretation gives definite, concrete meaning to sacred story and event, and affords instruction in the actuality of its significance for every human being.

It must be clear then why Luther was so disturbed by the enthusiasts, who, drawing upon the proclamation of the freedom of the Christian, defined the "inner light" proceeding from an immediate, individual experience as living religion and a sufficient wisdom. Over against all human limitation Luther pointed to the pure and infallible guide, the simple, but momentous meaning of the Word, whose every tittle was to him greater than heaven and earth. Luther based the truth of the Scriptural message primarily on direct inward experience and its witness. "I know nothing about Christ Jesus, because in body I have neither seen nor heard Him except His name. But in the Bible I learned so much about Him that I am content, and I do not desire to see Him in body nor to hear Him. Furthermore, in moments of great weakness, in terror, and under the oppression of the burden of sin, in fear and trembling before death, in days of persecution . . . I experienced and felt the divine power, which this Name proved to me, deserted of all creatures; it rescued me from death, restored me to life, comforted me in despair."¹⁵

All truth must be tried by its congruity with human realization. "Thus the Word of God and faith include each other, for when God speaks He can not speak except of things which go far beyond reason and which naturally we can neither understand nor grasp; therefore we must believe, and believing experience that it is truth."¹⁶ The Word may be thundered forth by a living voice before all, but its power is indeed concealed. Only he who believes knows its miraculous potency, he who feels and "tastes" it in his own heart. "It is quite one thing to preach, sing, and quite another to feel a gracious, compassionate, and just God within the heart. . . . Christians feel and experience in the heart that such things are not tossed into their laps by chance."¹⁷ When Luther speaks of "experiencing" faith, he conveys that this too is a gift of God and defines it as a sense for, and a particular sensibility toward, the Invisible and the Impossible. For it is very unlike any natural experience, which is common to all men. To "experience" faith is as remarkable and as "impossible" as the attainment of God, toward whom it is directed. In his *Table Talks* he points out that in natural experience sense cognizance precedes acceptance. In theology, however, religious experience, brought about by God, is based upon blind obedience and total surrender.¹⁸

Truth becomes truth only in the inner man, for the content of God's Word is not truth unless it is inworking truth. "In your very own conscience and consciousness you must feel Christ Himself, and experience immovably, that it is the Word of God. . . . If you do not feel it you have most assuredly not tasted the Word of God, and you do still cling to men's lips or pen, and your heart's foundation does not hang on the Word."¹⁹ One does not learn to know God through others, nor does reason alone instruct in Holy Writings. There are those, to be sure, who think they have captured God; however none will come to that unless he experience it, otherwise it is empty words. Faith can not be engendered except the Word become quickened and active within the heart. All objective truth must be confirmed by subjective experience. One must feel the Christ Himself in one's total being, and feel that the Word is eternal truth, "though an angel from heaven and all the world contend against it."²⁰

One must be seized by the Holy Spirit, the “wrath” of God must be transmuted into love in Christ, trust and confidence must be awakened to establish God and His Word as truth. In this sense the words of Christ and the prophecies are absolute revelation, absolute truth, and unconditional authority.

Luther distinguished between those convictions begotten within the Christian through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and those intended to be conveyed to others. It is impossible to prove or to impart wholly to another one’s own inward light, the own singular experience and irresistible certitude, the own inward knowing. “There is an inner conviction, wherein every Christian is in such a way enlightened through the Holy Spirit or by the special gift of God . . . that he most certainly discerns and distinguishes between all doctrine and opinion. I Cor. 2 says: ‘He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.’ This belongs to faith and is essential to every Christian . . . But this persuasion profits no one else . . . The other is the outer conviction by which we judge the tenets and their spirit not only for ourselves but also for others . . . the Scriptures must be the judge . . . Among Christians this above all must be confirmed and fixed, that the Bible is the spiritual light, brighter than the sun itself, particularly in all things pertaining to salvation.”²¹

Certainly belief in it does not make it God’s Word. But God the Father addressed His Word to men through Holy Scriptures, not because He wished to inform them about Himself or even to enlighten them concerning themselves, but to give Himself to them. Luther’s existence depended upon having a merciful God, “*einen gnädigen Gott kriegen*,” and in God’s Word he found this personal God, and life and fellowship with Him. Although the Holy Spirit Himself teaches everyone, so that in his heart he knows what is right, Scriptures must nonetheless be used to prove that as we believe in our hearts, so it is.

Luther maintained that the Bible must be freed from the domination of Church Fathers, councils, and popes. “I am certain that St. Gregory, Ambrose, and Augustine were holy men; but I do not trust them. For although they were pious, one can not say that they could neither err nor be mistaken and that one must

accept and build on the speech of all the Fathers . . . One must be careful to note whether their teaching accords in all parts with the teaching of Christ . . . the Lord Christ does not err, but the Christian Church may."²²

In view of this assertion one is forced to the question, who then may expound the Bible and who may explicate the meaning of its text? His answer is, he who "has the Holy Spirit," he of "washed feet," he who approaches it "with a believing mind,"²³ and is compelled by a zeal for the discovery of truth; not he who would analyse it to his own pleasure and purpose. For Luther was convinced that any impure motive must preclude enlightenment by the Spirit of God. Truth is revealed only in so far as he who searches the Scriptures freely and in love finds it and makes it his own. And, let it be understood, God's Holy Name is profaned and man's inmost sanctuary defiled when he seeks divine truth for any reason other than for the sake of freedom. Luther demanded that the analyst be endowed with spiritual gifts and that an exquisite susceptibility quicken his every perception and judgment.

Validity of the Books of the Bible

As would be expected, Luther concluded that the various Books of the Bible are not all equally valid. Some are inferior, even in the New Testament. One such is The Revelation of St. John, which warns that salvation is to them that accept it, and yet no one can know what salvation is. He would have everyone use his own judgment in regard to it. "As to the Book of Revelation, let each be of whatever mind he will, I would bind no one to my conceit or opinion. I speak that which I feel. The lack in this book is various. . . . There is no prophet in the Old Testament, let alone in the New Testament, who speaks so completely in vision and images. . . . Moreover, it seems to me . . . that [the book] commands and threatens too much; . . . more than any other of the holy books. . . . Those who keep its commands are to be saved, and yet no one knows, what it is he is to keep."²⁴ He was ready to admit that he had not fathomed its significance. "It has been the fate of this Book not to have yet come to the usefulness and effectiveness which it is to give to Christianity."²⁵

And he did not esteem too greatly the Epistle of St. James: "I praise the Epistle of James and consider it good even though it was rejected by the early Fathers, for it does not teach human doctrine, but sternly practices God's Law. But . . . I do not consider it an apostle's writing, and my reason is: first, contrary to St. Paul and all other Scriptures it accords righteousness to works. . . . Second, it undertakes to teach Christians and yet in such teaching does not even mention the suffering, resurrection, the Spirit of Christ. Christ is several times mentioned; but he teaches nothing concerning Him, but speaks of general faith in God. It is the task of a true apostle to preach Christ's suffering and resurrection and office. . . . All holy books agree in this that they preach and practice Christ. . . . Whatever Christ preaches that is apostolic. . . . But James does nothing more than to urge toward the Law and its works; and in disorderly manner he confuses one thing with the other. It appears to me that he was some pious man, who seized upon passages written by disciples of the Apostles and cast them on paper. . . . In brief, he wished to restrain those who depended upon faith without works, and yet he himself was too uncertain . . . and hoped to achieve by urging toward the Law what the Apostles accomplished by exciting toward love. Therefore I can not count it among the chief books; however, I would hinder no one from placing it or exalting it as he may wish; for there are many good passages in it."²⁶

He questioned whether the Holy Spirit prevails as unconditionally in certain Books as in others, he asked whether the early Christian Church had not accepted as cononical what one must acknowledge to be suspiciously deficient and weak, and what seems to be a matter simply of natural observation and reflection. But in this respect he would not bind anyone to the possible fallibility of his, Luther's views.

Humbly, exuberantly Luther praised those Books and passages which lighted his way out of darkness. His exegesis of Exodus 19 and 20 makes plain that the outer rites commanded in the Old Testament were but symbolic of the accomplishment of the New Testament. "Outward cleansing is commanded in the Old Testament . . . in the New Testament Christ touches the very heart, bone, and marrow. . . . In the Old Testament, in which all things occur in symbol, God desires . . . to teach, coerce, and curb

through outer holiness and purity in order to direct and guide toward inward holiness."²⁷

Luther discovered great bearers of divine revelation in the Bible; in the Old Testament these are Moses, whom he thought by no means uniform as to excellence or quality; the Prophets; in Isaiah, great as he is, he found such confusion that he doubted whether Isaiah himself had thus arranged his writings;²⁸ however, Luther exulted in Isaiah 53, this "incomparable among incomparable" chapters; and finally the Psalms. It is likely that Moses took the Decalogue "from the fathers,"²⁹ for these commandments had been "fashioned in man's heart" since the beginning of the world. It seemed certain to Luther too, that Moses had organized the books and histories of the patriarchs, those concerning creation, or the promise of the seed, for instance, and that he removed and added to these reports whatever and however God commanded him to do.³⁰ As early as in Genesis, God proclaimed the prophecy and universal truth that in Christ shall all peoples be blessed. The story of Abraham is almost an evangel in itself. The lawgiver Moses foretold that the Law would continue until Christ were come. Moses was the father of all prophecies of sacred books, of the wisdom and eloquence of heaven, just as all art and poetry of the Greeks flowed from the one fount, Homer.

To Luther the Psalms were extraordinarily remarkable, unlike any other human writing. The Foreword to the Psalter written in 1531 calls the Psalms *Biblia minor*, compressing everything in the Bible so excellently, "that it seems to me as if the Holy Spirit Himself had undertaken the labor of compiling a little Bible. . . ." The Psalms reveal the heart in its relation to God and man. "For the human heart is as a ship tossed by storms and tempests upon an unruly sea. . . . Such storms impel to grave speech, cause man to open his heart and to pour out its depths. . . . What is the greater part of the Psalter except such grave communion in every kind of tempest? Where can one find more goodly words of joy than in the psalms of praise? There one looks into the soul of the saints as into charming, pleasurable gardens, indeed, as into heaven itself, where delicate, sweet, lovely flowers of every kind unfold in delightful, gladsome thanksgiving toward God. And again, where can one find

deeper wailings and cries of grief than in the psalms of lamentation? There again one looks into the heart of the saints, as into death, indeed, as into hell.”³¹ Christ is the heart and center of the Psalms. Here is foretold that whosoever does not die with Christ and descend into hell will never arise from the dead with Him and ascend into heaven. Here is made plain that God is greater than our hearts and far greater than our thinking; here is the foretaste of the inscrutable, ineffable God revealed in the miracle of miracles, His Incarnation in Christ.

Luther was not as enthusiastic about the Prophets. “The prophets were pious, diligent men, who pondered divine and holy things earnestly, and meditated thereon; hence God spoke to them in their consciences and the prophets accepted that as a certain revelation.”³² Undoubtedly the Book of Job was related by a pious scholar, much as Virgil made Aeneas act and speak, as one composes a drama. “It is almost like an *Argumentum Fabulae*. . . . [Job] speaks and disputes with another as he feels and as he thinks. . . . The Hebrew poet and master of this book, whoever he may be [it was not Job who wrote it], himself experiences such temptations and tribulation. . . .”³³ Or, concerning the Book of Judith: “Judith is Judea, that is, the Jewish people . . . which is a widow. . . . Holofernes signifies *profanus Dux* . . . pagan, impious, or an un-Christian lord or prince; that is, all the enemies of the Jewish people. . . . It may be that such a poem was performed even as we present the passion plays and the lives of saints.”³⁴

In the New Testament he found the way to the God eternally reconciled, the God who is “pure and unspeakable love”; he discovered that “love is nothing other than pure God.”³⁵ In his 1545 Foreword to the New Testament he warned: “Be careful therefore, that you do not make a Moses out of Christ, nor out of the Gospel a book of Law, as has thus far been done by some, even by St. Jerome. For the Gospel does not really demand our work to make us pious and blessed . . . but it demands faith in Christ, that He make us pious, quick, and blessed, not through our work, but through His own work, death, and suffering; that we may accept His death and triumph as our own.”³⁶

Here is the God in whom all that lives and is has its life

and being. In eternity He is complete and blessed in Himself, in His majesty and divine nature He is the Word. He discourses and speaks and thinks with Himself in His divine heart, unknown to all angels and men. All that He does is good. He is the fullness and glory of all love and goodness, of all joy and all peace. And the Gospel of St. John, the Gospel of love, far superior to the other three, was to Luther the most profound revelation of this God.

In 1522 he selected the books which he considered the pith and substance of the New Testament: "From all of this you may rightly judge of all books and exercise discrimination as to which are the best. Namely, the Gospel of St. John, and St. Paul's Epistles, especially those to the Romans, and St. Peter's First Epistle are the heart and marrow among all the books. . . . Since St. John writes very little about the works of Christ, but very much about His sermons, and again the other three evangelists describe many of His works, but fewer of His words: the Gospel of St. John is the one delicate, true Gospel, much, much to be preferred and elevated above the other three. . . . In short, the Gospel of St. John, his First Epistle, the Epistles of St. Paul, especially to the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, and the First Epistle of St. Peter, these are the books which show you Christ, and teach you everything that is necessary for you to know."³⁷ The eternal truth revealed in the Gospel of St. John affected Luther deeply. Not only did its content bring release from anxiety and imbue with sublime serenity, but its simple, forceful style delighted him. St. John speaks in "simplest words, majestically, when he says: 'In the beginning was the Word' . . . with words most simple, as with a flash of lightning, he describes God, the Creator, and His creatures. If a philosopher or scholar were to depict them, he would burst out into strange, pompous, high-flown words and rend the air with *de ente et essentia*, concerning things and being, of divine and heavenly power, and bring about that none of it be understood."³⁸ Even though God, accepted in the light of the Word and faith, is still hidden, Luther's biblical belief that "faith is of the substance of God" constituted for him the one truth wherein man completely depends upon God, is saved, is free. He therefore rejected the speculative theology of

Roman Scholasticism, which was directed by reason to a speculative, philosophic concept concerning substance and being.

Luther emphasized that there are not four Gospels, but one. "First of all it is necessary to lay aside the illusion that there are four Gospels and only four evangelists; and it is necessary to reject entirely the division of some of the New Testament books into content *legales*, *historiales*, *prophetales*, and *sapientiales*; . . . it is needful to hold fast to this, that even as the Old Testament is a book in which God's Law and commandments are written, and further the story of those who kept them and those who did not: even so the New Testament is a book in which is written the Gospel and God's promise, and in addition the story of those who believe therein and those who do not."³⁹ The Gospel proclaims the one sermon of God's grace and mercy, won through the Lord Christ; it is not what is written in books or composed in the letters of the alphabet, but rather it is a living Word, a voice ringing out into the world. Christ carried on His ministry and taught by word of mouth. This fact was insistently stressed, because it is essential to distinguish between the spiritual nature of the Gospel, its performance and effectiveness in the heart and mind, and the law and letter. Christian theology, which is faith attempting an analysis of itself, presents the great contrast between sin and grace. God is not only our Father and Creator, He is also our Redeemer. Through Christ the forgiveness of sin becomes an historical fact, and through Him and the Holy Spirit sent by Him, the positive regeneration of man is effected. Faith must cling to those books which most fully and powerfully "practice Christ." "Those books which are concerned with the teaching and words of Christ, are the most laudable. . . . Thus you may judge of all books and their teaching. . . . All Christians have this right to judge."⁴⁰

Must not the theory that every Christian is capable of independent judgment in the interpretation of Holy Writ lead to endless discussion and dispute? In the polemic against Henry VIII⁴¹ Luther countered the question by reference to John 6, 45: "They shall be all taught of God" and of the Holy Spirit dwelling within. This fact must instil the confidence that every true Christian will know, judge, and obey the one and only truth.

External and hypocritical unity can obtain only where the Holy Spirit is not.

Man's liberation from the domination of traditional authority constitutes Luther's greatness in the history of enlightenment. No less significant is his principle of Bible interpretation according to one's own conscience; for here lies the foundation of the modern concept of "moral autonomy." In this enunciation of individual autonomy, Luther gave direction to the future course of thought, in that he granted to human intelligence the right to pursue its ends and to seek freely after truth in all fields. For in the world of things the authority of conscience was in time supplanted inevitably by the authority of experience and reason. Rationalism with its doctrine of the autonomy of reason and all its progeny was here incipient, as was Pietism, which cast off all dogma. In the history of the spirit, in philosophy, it signifies that freedom replaced form. The way was being prepared for German idealism, for Kant and Hegel, for Goethe and Schiller, Bach and Beethoven, bearers all of Luther's legacy bequeathed to the history of the freedom of the German spirit.

RATIONAL AND NON-RATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF GOD⁴²

In seeking the God who forgives iniquity, Luther, in moments of struggling with the nature and being of God, found himself shaken and terror-stricken in the "Presence" of the Holy One. These moments communicated to him a sense of the divine holiness of God, which is not essentially, or even purely, the perfection and goodness known to the realm of ethics, but is something beyond these. In its substance this holiness is the inscrutable, mysterious, awful, and majestic nature of God. Luther later recalled those moments when his very existence before God was at stake: "I know one, who endured such great pangs of hell, as no tongue can speak out and no pen can write, and none can believe, who has not experienced them."⁴³ It was the absolute might, the unapproachable majesty, the dismaying and appalling tremendousness that crushed and overwhelmed him, that unrolled before him his creaturehood, null and void. In his utter helplessness and lostness he was struck with mortal fear. He trembled before the

stern Judge who commanded that His Law be fulfilled and righteousness enthroned; his soul recoiled before the pre-Gospel God in His primal terror, before His curse upon the renegade and depraved one; but even more did he, the creature, naked of all claim, quail before the mystery of an abysmal and unrevealed God.

This encounter with the unrevealed, the nonrational element in God over and against the rational in the Being of God, was the continuation and intensification of the old struggle between the rational and nonrational experience in religion, present in the Old Testament, in Greek philosophy, and in the New Testament. It is represented in less starkness in the struggle between Platonism and Aristotelianism. It was basic in Luther's protest against the Scholasticists, and was the factor which determined and explains his strong opposition to Aristotle and to the "modern theologians." Plato, the idealist, regarded the deity as identical with the "Idea of the Good," that is, God is a rational being. Plato however did not remain within this confine. To the consideration of God in concepts, in generalized notions and schematized ideas, he added the "myth," "eros," "mania," "enthusiasms," that is, he added those nonrational religious experiences which correspond to the "supra"-rational: "love," "divine madness," "inspiration," all denoting a transcendence of man's power to comprehend. For to Plato God was truly beyond man's conceiving. In Aristotle there was more theology than in Plato, but less religion, for Aristotle's theology was in the main rationalistic.

This contrast between the two philosophers continued through the centuries with the "Platonists" and the "Aristotelians." Scholasticism had attempted an intelligible elucidation of the program established by St. Augustine, who had sought to unite the revealed truths of the Christian religion with Neo-Platonism and Platonic idealism. This trend was continued in Anselm of Canterbury's speculative idealism. The logical empiricism which grew out of a closer orientation in Aristotle called forth the pious rationalism of Abelard. Luther objected to the purely rational dogmatism as found in Thomas Aquinas. Yet he possessed in many respects a greater kinship and affinity to Thomas than to many another Scholasticist. This same protest appears again in his rejection of the rationalized religion of Erasmus.

This contest between emphasis upon the rational and non-

rational elements in religion was operative in another way in the philosophy of the Stoics, which sees God as the wise one, the sage, who through the conquest of his passions and affections has achieved a desired apathy of feeling. Christianity was attracted to this passionless God, and attempted to unite this God of Wisdom with the "living God" of Holy Writ. Duns Scotus was aware of the nonrational or "numinous" quality in the godhead, and it assumed form in his God who "wills," that is to say, in the interpretation which authenticates volition and confirms that the act and faculty of willing is present in both God and man. This manner of interpretation was joined in battle with that view which acclaimed the God of "being," and which approached Him through "cognition." The nonrational elements still latent in Duns Scotus in the end broke forth in the religious and revolutionary genius of Luther.

Luther's distrust of the influence of Greek philosophy on religion sprang from his distrust of human presumption. He felt that Aristotelianism and Neo-Platonism had the tendency to reduce the Gospel to little more than doctrine and *Weltanschauung*. And there was always the danger, as he saw it, that human reason might convert a solemn issue into a trifle, especially since allegorical interpretation was permitted a wide latitude for imparting whatever meaning it chose. Luther realized that in the medieval union of faith and reason, faith had become obscured by the predominance of reason. In contrasting Aristotle with Plato, he always gave preference to Plato, probably because his temperament responded to Plato's aesthetic taste and style. Luther endorsed the reading of Aristotle's *Poetica* in the schools, but he condemned his metaphysics. In his tract *To the Christian Nobility*, he suggested that the universities might do well to dispense with the study of Aristotle's *Ethics*, for here human reason in its own pride stands opposed to the Christian doctrine of divine grace given freely without man's merit. He further proposed that theologians become learned in Holy Writ, and intimated that complete absorption in the *Sententiae* might not effectually further this end. His attacks upon philosophy, as such, emphasize his care and alertness that the Gospel should not again be subordinated to reason as in Scholasticism. Philosophy can not explain

and interpret the religious faith and mystery that appertain to the Gospel. Religion and philosophy belong to distinctive realms of human experience: the one has to do with faith, the other with ascertainable facts and speculations concerning them. And since the two are unlike and often of opposed opinion, religion with its deeper human involvement must stand supreme, and philosophy with its rational insights must be subordinated. This does not mean that Luther spurned philosophy. He often quoted the ancients in corroboration of his own views, and he knew and used the methods of Aristotelian logic and dialectic.

The truth of Scriptures is an object of contradiction to the reason of natural, unregenerate man; and the striving of man, enslaved in sin and worldliness, is always directed against it. Human reason has to do with worldly purposes, with analysing them and applying them in establishing civil law and order, for instance, but it does not recognize divine things, nor is it capable of the exaltation of man into communion with God, nor discerning "the things which touch salvation."⁴⁴ Luther evinced a warm regard for reason and its capabilities as such, and rejoiced that man was especially "endowed with the glorious light of reason and intelligence"; gratefully he acknowledged "that men have devised and invented many noble arts, whether in the realm of wisdom, agility, of proficiency."⁴⁵ He acclaimed the achievement of classical antiquity. In "the reborn and illumined believer" reason becomes "a resplendent instrument of God"; "for even as all gifts of God and natural skills are harmful to the impious, so are they salutary for the pious."⁴⁶

God, the Holy One

Beyond philosophy and beyond the ability of human reason, Luther stood before the static God, who is at rest in Himself; he was shaken by the dynamic God, active and motive energy, the God, seemingly acting at the behest of will and whim, the incomprehensible God "hidden away" and unrevealed. Thus when he expounded the Decalogue in Exodus 20, he was deeply stirred by the transcendence of God, called the "noumenon" by Kant, or the "numinous" by Rudolf Otto, the mysterious incomprehensible nature of God. "God is a consuming, annihilating fire, which de-

vours all things"; "a consuming fire, a zealous God";⁴⁷ "He is man's undoing."⁴⁸ "In truth God takes delight in assailing man, in His wrath and jealousy He is compelled to consume the wicked."⁴⁹ Here is the felt presence of a majesty, an omnipotence, and tremendousness, an utter daemonism in God, which accentuates the helplessness of the creature, and begets a convulsiveness of experience matched only by the exultant release which compacts and binds the whole of Christianity into a confident faith.

No one can escape such fear before God; for if man "thinks of God aright, his heart within his body is struck with terror, he is impelled to fly to the ends of the earth; indeed, as soon as he hears God named, he is awed and overawed, he is filled with trepidation and fear. . . . For his conscience feels and knows that God is the enemy of sin, condemns, and that he can not flee from God's wrath: therefore he trembles, quakes, is afrighted, turns pale and grows cold as before a flash of lightning or a thunderbolt. Then Christ must rush forward with might and put sweet, kindly, assuaging words into his heart to remove the gloom, bitterness, and dread, and to image the Father in the heart's best-beloved manner."⁵⁰

The meaning of this is, that in his passionate search for God Luther was confronted not only by the God revealed and understood, but he also encountered that mysteriousness, which is the numen," the super-rational, sheer paradox that baffles all comprehension, which is God. Luther was well aware that mortal man can not stand before God in His Majesty, in His absoluteness, before the *divinitas nuda*, and live. No living creature can behold God in His Mystery and Holiness, in His Being in Himself, in the absoluteness of Truth, Righteousness, Justice, nor even in the Love and Mercy which He is, and not die. For man is sinful, imperfect, God is pure, is the Good, the Perfect, the Holy. No bridge leads from man in his state of sin, of relativity, to God who is holy and absolute. Because His absoluteness unveiled, His Holiness in itself can be beheld by angels alone, by the sainted spirits in heaven, cleansed and purified, did He send His Son to earth, that He might give Himself to men as God, the Incarnate. As an act of love God, "hidden" in His Majesty, became Man. "The incarnate Son of God is that concealment in which divine

Majesty offers Himself to us with all His gifts, so that there is no sinner so wretched that he might not dare approach Him in firm trust, and obtain forgiveness. That is the only glimpse of the God-head possible in this life.”⁵¹ Luther stood before God in His wrath, which is God without Christ. He stood before God in His grace and righteousness, which is God in Christ. But in His unapproachable Majesty God remains “hidden.” Even in Christ: “Christ is incomprehensible. No one can comprehend Him in this life, or know rightly what and who He is, for He is God. I can not even wholly express my own *affectus*, stirring, and thoughts, how should I then ever wholly compass the majesty of Christ?”⁵² Indeed, the “grace of God is so great that it can neither be grasped nor understood without assailment, anxiety, and battle.”⁵³

Precisely because he was so shaken by it and atremble with the wonder of it did he storm against the “harlot reason” for claiming arrogantly to be the sole guide and means of finding God. Luther, as previously stated, warmly acknowledged reason, “ratio,” reasoning and thinking directed to the divine and the mundane. For “the laudable, liberal arts invented and brought to light by learned, admirable people, even though they were heathen, are good and useful for this life; and [they] are creations, noble, precious gifts also to this child of man [Luther], which he has used and still uses to the pleasure, praise, honor, and glory of His Holy name.”⁵⁴ At no time was there any doubt as to the excellence and use of man’s reason. “Reason is also a light, and a fine light. But, remaining in darkness, it can neither show nor divine the way and direction away from sin and death, and toward righteousness and life.”⁵⁵ For “human reason and nature can not comprehend God in His majesty. Therefore we are not to seek nor search further what is God’s will, being, or nature, except in so far as He has commanded us. He gave us His Word in which He richly revealed what we are to know, think, believe, and what we may confidently expect of Him.”⁵⁶

Luther’s own experiences disclosed to him that reason may be luminous with the light of God and in such light overcome sin and evil; it may dwell in darkness, and work mischief in God’s kingdom. “Reason, possessed of the devil, contrives great harm to things concerning God . . . Illumined by the Holy Spirit, how-

ever, it is an aid in judging Holy Scriptures . . . the tongue as a tongue does not contribute to faith except as it is assisted by an enlightened heart. Thus likewise does illuminated reason minister to faith in that it reflects upon things. Enlightened reason draws all its thoughts from the Word of God, and judges and directs in accord with it. In substance and essence it remains as it was made; but vanity and evil perish, when reason is lighted with the Holy Spirit."⁵⁷

Luther distinguished clearly between the nonrational and the natural or rational cognizance of God. God reveals His omnipotence and His wondrous deeds in the smallest creatures as well as in His Creation; and "the expression of the Holy Trinity . . . is found and seen in all fine arts and creatures."⁵⁸ Had Adam not fallen, how readily would God have been comprehended, praised, and adored in His Creation, and His almighty goodness recognized! This natural recognition of God is essential, but it is only a limited part of man's approximation of God.

Let none believe with Scholasticism, Luther warned, that we may find our "dear Father" in His Creation by our own reason and strength, that by natural knowledge of Him we shall find the way to the "God of mercy." No human brooding, however prolonged, no speculation, however high it may climb, no contemplation, however unremitting, can achieve insight into the heart, will, and work of the Father outside Christ. Human reason in its wisdom knows of an eternal, divine Being, the Creator of heaven and earth, ruling and maintaining all things. It has in addition a limited knowledge of a just God, who punishes wickedness, who in His majesty is a "consuming fire." But such perception of God in His creation is but a cognition of His existence from without, "*a posteriori*"; God is known externally, as one sees a castle or house and thereby concludes there is a lord or master.

No human wisdom has yet plumbed what and how God is in Himself, God in heaven, His thinking, in His inner Being, God in His aloneness, separate from Christ, the "*deus absolutus*," the "*divinitas nuda*"; no human reason has knowledge of Him "*a priori*."⁵⁹ Such knowledge is only in Christ, by the revelation of the Holy Spirit. No general, natural recognition of God can

know what God thinks of each of us, nor what His plan is for each individual human being. That is revealed in His "relative" Being alone, in His relation to man in Jesus Christ.

God revealed Himself in time, in the body, in history, for only in the realm of creation, in time, is cognizance of Him possible. Beyond the world of His Creation, beyond time, He is the "*divinitas nuda*," the "naked God," inaccessible to man. The human mind, spirit, and being, because created, is bound to time, is finite. Therefore God revealed Himself in a manner suited to our capabilities. He adapted Himself to our weakness, our createdness, and became Man, historical, a creature. In the flesh we could most readily approach Him. Christ became Man. He was made a sign for the form that divine life takes everywhere in the world: namely "hidden" in history, masked in the realm of appearance, entangled in death and life. God wishes to be found in His Incarnation. And thereby we have come to feel Him in, outside, and above all creatures. "The countenance of God is reflected in all creatures; for they are the works of God, witness to His will and His divine presence."⁶⁰ We can feel Him, but He is still incomprehensible. For outside His revelation there is always the "*deus absconditus*," the "*divinitas nuda*," in whose light we can not see except we die.

In his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans Luther sets forth that our present natural knowledge of God is beclouded by sin. Because thanklessness, issuing from self-love, inheres in man, such knowledge often ends in idolatry and God is worshiped not as He is but as He is "imagined." An idol is but a figment of God, a projection of the self. Building on human conceit, the idol worshiper seeks benefits rather than truth, consummation of desires rather than obedience. Idolatry thus makes of God a wish-fulfillment, a rewarder of human merit. Therefore justification by works belongs to the category of idolatry.

The light of nature, however idealistic, is blinded and ignorant of grace. Faith alone enlightens. Grace knows and strives for none other than God; nature knows and seeks none other than self. Every true knowledge of God's righteousness, goodness, and majesty condemns the self. Moreover, every true knowledge of

God is possible only in the strength of the divine Spirit. The Holy Spirit kindles, inspires, and calls forth faith, faith transforms the mind and thus leads to the recognition of God.⁶¹

To Luther God is beyond all tracking out in His mysteries and His judgments, in His fearful marvels and incomprehensibility, for in His veriest essence He is hidden away from all reason, and man can discern in Him neither law, nor measure, nor aim. He appears capricious. His moves are paradoxical. But this mysterious remoteness, the enigmatic obscurity, the uncanny tremendousness which the unrevealed God is in contrast to the God revealed, constitutes God as God. And Luther, like St. Paul, came to see that, in order that there might be a place for faith, the things that are believed must be "hidden away." Almost three centuries later Immanuel Kant will declare a like truth. This paradox inheres in the very core of God's nature. The concept of justice, for instance, so clearly and rationally knowable to man in his overweening self-esteem, carries a "hidden," mysterious import in God, and is not understood by man. Referring to this in his *De Servo Arbitrio* Luther says: "For were His justice such as could be adjudged as just by human understanding, it were manifestly not divine, and would differ in no way from human justice. But since God is veritable and single, yea, in His entirety incomprehensible and inaccessible to human reason, it is right, nay, it follows necessarily, that His justice also is incomprehensible."⁶²

In the onslaughts of Satan and "*desperatio*," in the ever recurring moments of melancholy and forlornness, in the paroxysms of catastrophe, in his wrestlings for grace, perpetually renewed, Luther's soul was driven by reason, to be sure. But it was impelled in addition by a something far less tangible and definable; it was scourged on by a force, coercive, which is altogether hidden from reason. And even when he spoke in purely rational idiom of the "wrath of God," of "His judgment and punishment," he borrowed terms from human life quite inadequate to convey the "numinous" quality of the "fury of Yahweh," which has nothing to do with natural rage or anger. The terms "fury," "wrath," "anger," vengeance," "consuming fire," so common in the Old Testament, stem from the conception of a God, just, righteous, all-requiting, to be sure, but they are grounded, begotten, and

born in that awe-inspiring majesty and mystery of the “numinous,” which is the total and absolute “otherness” of God. They merely approximate in human words the substance of the Holy One, whose Being is completely beyond the reach of human conception and terminology. “Trinitas,” “unitas,” Luther averred, are “mathematical words” which can not be applied to God in a mathematical sense, and yet they must be used, though they are wholly foreign and extraneous; for whatever we may say about “the Triune God — and that He is — is still mere stammering.”⁶³ “For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord: Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Spirit, art most high in the glory of God the Father.”

The “Otherness” of God

In the omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience of His majesty, in the immutability of His decrees, in His Holiness, God is unfathomable. He is unfathomable in His thoughts, in His performance, in His mysterious ways, for they are totally at variance with human calculations and expectations. God inverts all human values. His “otherness” therefore baffles human understanding.

He moves in contrasts. Is it not foolishness that He should first destroy whom He makes perfect? that He should save whom He condemns? God, both veiled and unveiled, justifies the sinner by faith. It is His glory to suffer for man’s sin. God Himself is made flesh and dies on the cross. The “*deus absconditus*” is one with the “*deus crucifixus*.” All that man eschews is raised to eternal validity in the crucifixion of Christ. Here the “otherness” of God is revealed in the unending rhythm of judgment and grace, humiliation and exaltation, death and life. Whom He would bring to life He first crucifies, whom He would raise up He first brings to suffering and death. No human reason can fathom God’s hidden way of the Cross. No law of cause and effect would render homage to the Cross as a force able to solve life’s problems.

And yet, in the Cross of Christ God’s judgment assumed reality in history. Christ died that God might glorify Him. By His poverty, shame, ignominy, cross all worldly wisdom was proved folly. In His weakness was a strength greater than that of all worldly power, His death brought life everlasting, His love over-

came all evil. In the union of God and Man in Christ the Godhead was humbled and hidden in flesh, and in Him alone was man's destiny fulfilled and led into the Godhead.

The wrath in the cross but cloaked God's mercy. In the bitterness of His suffering the Son of Man cried out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Nonetheless, as God pervades all things, thus the single and exultant joy which sets free pervaded Christ's great Passion. Though fear and terror prompted the cry for the Father's mercy: "Let this cup pass from me!" yet His will could say: "Father, if thou wilt!" And by the voluntary submission of His own human will to the will of the Father He could proclaim the triumphant: "It is finished!" And having submitted in the flesh, His body was raised again from the dead, was transfigured, and sits on the right hand of the Father. The death and resurrection of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was for Luther the most eloquent and most powerful expression of the mysterious being and nature of God, baffling and abysmal in His "otherness."

Man, having his existence in the nimbus of God's "otherness," is drawn into the orbit of His impenetrable Majesty and unsearchable Love. In the strength of this knowledge Luther continuously advised, behold the cross in Christ, and it is no longer a cross. Bless the cross, and it is made a triumph. Submit to the cross, be still, and await His grace and glory. For God, the Infinite and Timeless One, can not suffer, can not die. But become incarnate, He gave up the ghost on the cross and arose again the third day. In like manner that which is of time and space suffers, dies, and is resurrected unto the eternal Father through the Holy Spirit in Christ. The positive lies hidden in the negative, in suffering God is present with His blessing, in condemnation He offers salvation.

God in His "otherness" establishes a conflict between Himself and man, between the Holy Spirit and the flesh, to the purpose that man may be re-created, re-generated, and made His instrument. Therefore He who would become mighty and wise in the strength of God must first become weak, humble, and "foolish" before man. For the contrast and contradiction obtains also in the believer's life: "Want of understanding is the right knowledge of whither you are going."⁶⁴

We are not the doers, but God in and through Christ and His

Holy Spirit in us. All our own strength, wisdom, and righteousness must be hidden away, annihilated, and buried. We must acknowledge our sinfulness, our impotence, our hostility to God, we must be emptied of self so that God may work in us. Thus is He glorified. Thereby is the way of the Christian also a paradox and a miracle most mysterious: his suffering is his joy, his weakness is his strength, his foolishness is his wisdom, his humiliation his exaltation, his judgment his sanctification, his cross is his blessedness.

This same awareness of the mystery and majesty of God, augmented by fascination, begets that mood of worship, that speechless trembling, that is the creature's pure humility before the Ineffable. It is the *Schaudern* of which Goethe-Faust speaks: "*Das Schaudern ist der Menschheit bestes Teil. . . . Ergriffen fühlt er tief das Ungeheure.*"⁶⁵ "Trembling in awe is man's best state. . . . Shaken he deeply feels the terrifying, overwhelming mystery [that is God]." It begets that assurance and tranquillity which discovers in the "Holiness" a God brimming over with pure goodness; it begets that transport which is the ecstasy of trust and the strength that can do all things.

In the almost unexampled intensity of Luther's religious experience, this "numinous" element in God prostrated his soul in awe and wonder, in exultation and adoration before an Incomprehensible, Immanent Presence. The unapproachable and consuming Holy One became the Father of goodness and love. It was the Presence of this Holy God which evoked the lyricism and blissful abandon with which he extolled the rational and nonrational in his faith, the love and trust in God. Christians, in Luther's words, can not do other than rejoice and sing praises, they ought to dance and leap for joy. To trust in Him and to find in Him their pride and joyfulness should kindle a fire and a light in their hearts, so that they should never cease dancing and leaping with joy. Who will utter it forth? It can be neither expressed nor conceived. "Before it we should rather be silent than speak aught of it."⁶⁶

LUTHER'S WELTANSCHAUUNG

By distinguishing with salutary severity between philosophy and theology, Luther did not contemplate removing all rational

thought from religion. He was far too original, too creative, too close to the primal forces of nature, too inclusive in his thinking not to have identified his own *Weltanschauung* with his theology. His life and work converged in the consideration of one question: the Being of God and His relation to man. And here he was so great a genius, that he drew all of life's experiences into the ambit of his reflections. It was precisely his wrestlings with God which, in the form of religious and prophetic beholding, in the form of theological discernment, penetrated into every aspect of human life and produced new attitudes and established new standards of judgment in all areas. His thinking in religious terms projected immeasurable influence upon the future spiritual weal of men and upon the development of German philosophy and culture.

A shallow rationalism, eagerly applying the laws of logic to the realm of God, gave neither answer nor repose to his spirit. He knew that the mind's dialectic is unable to resolve the antinomies of existence, that it must remain forever sceptical of the God whose actions appear so contradictory and so conflictingly antithetical. He could not permit any human interpretation or doubt or even denial to darken the lustre of the "Theology of the Cross." He had run the gamut of scholastic reasoning and turned from it in despair. He had sought out the Cause of all causes and found no comfort in its proposed ultimate goal; he had tried to detect Cause and Effect in control in the world; step by step he had followed logic to the First Cause, effective in all others. But all human speculation proved indefinite, tenuous, ineffectual, impalpable, and elusive. And yet, in spite of all this, he did not deny the validity either of a philosophy of life or of philosophy for its own sake.

Luther's own *Weltanschauung*, his philosophy of consciousness, his theological thinking, was founded on a remarkable realism. He was certain that neither man's conception nor his thinking makes or made things as they are; that man's concepts are either right or wrong insofar as they coincide or do not coincide with an actual state of being. In themselves all things are incomprehensible, and no Aristotelian causal considerations, no human argument, no human experience can even skirt, let alone enter into their reality. Within its own strength it is not given to the human mind to

achieve access to things or objects in their reality or to Reality itself. Only enlightenment by the Holy Spirit makes thus able.

Moreover, Luther was certain that Creation, that "being made," being acted upon, that passive assent to such creative activity, proceeding neither from man nor from objects, is the first principle of life. Or, in the realm of knowledge, that impression precedes, and that this constitutes "being created," a becoming, a coming into being out of nothing. The recognition of sin presumes the existence of good through grace. Man must be presented empty, weak, foolish; sin must show him that he is nothing, before God can endow him with being, strength, wisdom, righteousness. God must destroy the form and content of our thinking before implanting in us His divine counsel and life. The Holy Spirit works this transformation in us. Thus God's relation to man rests upon the realistic conception that the Being of God precedes action, that man is acted upon before he is. Luther held that the objects of human cognizance have real existence; they do not exist merely in the subjective mind, which perceives or otherwise cognizes them. In a word, the origin of the object of sense perception, of things, is ascribed to a higher Reality—God is the Creator, the Maintainer, in the beginning, now, and forever.

God, the Creator, is a dynamic force. He is the origin of, He is immanent in and constantly active in the phenomena of nature and in the universe. All of life, made by Him, is continuous movement, an interweaving of penance and of divine service of thanksgiving, of sin and justification, of being forsaken of God and surrendered to Him, of lostness and salvation. Luther's theology, intrinsically dynamic in its concept of mobility and activity, replaced the former static metaphysics of substance. He no longer thought of God and man as two clearly defined substances; nor did he conceive of grace as a heavenly substance, infused and gradually transforming the old substance in man, as had the Middle Ages. All of man is depraved, all of man is saved and sanctified in Luther's view. The spirit, the will, the mind are caught in the vortex of an impelling and stimulating force engaged in a never-ceasing struggle between good and evil. It is the Mover of all things who stirs and quickens, who is active in forgiveness of sin, in grace, faith, and hope. Divine activity is contin-

uously creative in the spontaneity of God's omnipotence, in the unending work of redemption in Christ, in the anointment without measure in which the Holy Ghost bestows His gifts and keeps us in true faith.

In addition to the realism and to the religious dynamism so dominant in him, there are intimations of transcendentalism in Luther. That is, he recognizes the limitations of human cognizance and consciousness and knows there is a Reality beyond our consciousness. This Reality, neither material nor organic, God, is beyond the reach of mundane experience and manipulation. He is incomprehensible to human thinking, and yet He is. In His Being He regulates things. In the universe God is the All in All, and without Him man is nothing.

Luther was certain that everything in man's life depends upon his concept of God. Man is confined to consciousness and to belief. And within the limits of consciousness and faith God and man are closely bound together. God initiates the relation by granting man faith and giving Himself in faith. Therefore, he who believes, "has" God, and he who does not believe does not "have." To him who believes God to be good and merciful, He *is* good and merciful. To him who scorns Him and mistrusts Him, He is a God of wrath and vengeance. In the manner of transcendentalism Luther believed that "as I recognize God, thus He is to me"; or "as I believe, thus I have."⁶⁷ God is real to us as we believe or disbelieve. If I believe in the God who is Love, He is to me the God who loves me. If I behold the wrath in God, He is to me a "consuming fire." To be sure, the wrath of God is not wrath as we understand it. It is the reflection of God, "hidden," unrevealed to the consciousness of the sinner. For to Luther nothing exists outside the creature and creation except the "simple Godhead." And as the heart magnifies Him and praises Him His exaltation and glory become a reality to the mind. God actually is, He is real, in faith. All rational knowledge notwithstanding. That is the attitude characteristic of transcendentalism.

This, however, is not to say that man's mind or imagination "creates" God, as in subjective idealism, nor does it mean that God appears as ultimate inwardness in the soul's foundation, setting aflame the diminutive "spark," as in Mysticism. Neither of

these is Luther's way. Luther thinks of God in His "concreteness," in His particular and specific Being. To him God is more than a concept, an idea, more than an abstraction or generalization, for He is not a projection of human speculation. He *is*, He *exists*. He wants to be known and believed in as He is in reality and actuality: just, merciful, good, unfailing in loving-kindness, the true God. This is His glory and the realization of His glory.

Luther did not think of God and the Godhead as an abstract idea, nor only in His remoteness, separated from world and man, nor as a deep, inner concentrate in the soul, in reason, or even in the will. Nor did he envisage God, the Holy of Holies, as a form of absolute transcendence to be experienced only by intellectual contemplation, a Being within Itself, completely free of any entanglements with the realities of this world as did Zwingli, the rationalists, and the spiritualists. They saw God as spirit, as the ultimate of innateness and consciousness, who, in His very essence can not be outward, corporeal. Luther did not accentuate the concept of the spirit "*an sich*," but built his faith upon the certitude that the spiritual becomes real in the finite, historical world. Whereas the humanists, the mysticists, the enthusiasts, and Zwingli interpreted "spirit" rationally as "substance," Luther interpreted the Word and the meaning of God idealistically as history.

And this brought Luther to emphasize the saving grace of Christ, a conception not new, but obscured in the Roman Church. He placed exclusive emphasis upon the momentous and historically significant truth, that the way to God is through Christ. Whoever would come to God "by faith alone" ignores Christ. By the appropriation of the work of Christ only does the Father wish to be approached. The mysticist who depends upon the "uncreated Word" and hopes to be absorbed into the Godhead is going astray and will not achieve his goal. The fact of the historical Christ, His offer of Himself as a reconciliation between God and man, was necessary, for by it we are cleansed and justified before the throne of God. The blessings of God are ours "through Christ," "through faith." The historical Christ, who lived in actuality, suffered, died, and arose in reality, is essential to our salvation. And only "in faith in Him" do we possess Him and the eternal love of God.

The Godhead is an actual realization in us. Divine power pours itself out into the external world, into history, into the communion of saints. God is found in the reality of His Incarnation in history, and in the faith in this Incarnation. God is a Spirit, of whom Luther thinks in the concrete, actual, specific. This conception ties Luther to Athanasius of the past and to German Idealism in the future. It is borne by faith in the self-realization of the Divine Spirit in nature and in history. For Luther the basic fact and the basic idea of Christian theology is St. John's: "The Word was made flesh." The Incarnation of God confesses to the concrete Being of God in the Man Christ and therefore acknowledges a concrete conception of the Holy Spirit which God is.

Mysticism in Luther's Theology

In his search for the God of grace Luther was compelled by an inner exigency imploring more than an intellectual comprehension of God. Abstract thinking and argumentation could not resuscitate his parched soul. He could not believe God to be some blind abstraction apprehended in the mental operation of separating from God supposed qualities and attributes for the purpose of analysing and contemplating them as thus separated essences and substances. He had to reject Pelagianism. Nor could he accept the dogma of Semi-Pelagianism, this attempted compromise between St. Augustine, who asserted that man is morally dead, and Pelagius, who held that he is morally well. In the fifth century Cassian in France had founded Semi-Pelagianism by contending that man is morally ill; that the free will of man co-operates with divine grace in the attainment of salvation; and that God determines to save those, who, He sees, will of themselves seek salvation. Luther could not believe with Cassian in a predestination dependent upon man's exercise of his free will to choose the good. Luther further found little instruction and comfort in the subtle distinctions and definitions amassed by Scholasticism in its effort to merge church tenets with speculative thought, for its structure presented fragmentations, confusion, complexity.

But if pure abstractions and rational speculation failed him, the teachings of Mysticism struck an affinitive chord, distinct, lofty, even though incomplete. The mysticist believes that truth can not with certainty be gained empirically or by reason alone. He finds

the valid source of divine manifestation in the feeling, inspiration, and intuition of the secluded soul. A felt consciousness of God, immediate, direct, is to him the single, absolute principle of truth. By meditative and intuitive method, by contemplation, love, and self-surrender the soul attains to unity with God in the "*unio mystica*."

The principle of Mysticism, "God gives, man receives," reiterates the basic Evangelical truth that salvation is the free and total gift of God, which but needs to be received. Mysticism believes that the greater the self-denial the more operative is hope, quite in contrast to the teaching of Scholasticism, that the greater the claim to merit the more certain is hope. In the mystical demand of annihilation of the wilful self Luther discovered a belief akin to his own fundamental conviction that man stands in need of total redemption. Since Luther felt man's entire lostness in sin so intensely, the healing had to be correspondingly intense and as utterly indivisible. All of man, the entire person must be sanctified. The practice of Mysticism of making ready to receive by relaxation, by a yielded expectation, and by passive submission to the Eternal One for the penetration and inflow of the light of grace and love, awakened a deep response in Luther. The more complete the self-denial in surrender to God the more aware was he of being filled with divine peace. And the assurance grew within him that he, the sinner, was made a sanctuary for the presence of God, that "eternal wellspring, which overflows with utter kindness, and whence flows everything that is called, and is good."⁶⁸

Mysticism is prominent in Plato's system, in Neo-Platonism, in Dionysius Areopagita; it underlies the Gospel of St. John, approaches rational knowledge in St. Augustine, and savors of pantheism in Duns Scotus. To a greater or less degree each of these had some share in the formulation of Luther's theology. Mystic emphasis upon the "otherness" of God revealed to him the God of contrasts, a "hidden" God. In analysing the "otherness" he came upon the God who is in actuality hidden behind the world of phenomena and is active in the apparent tragedy of human life. For God is the incomprehensible, but actual Reality, from whom there is no escape, in whom and through whom the Christian suffers and triumphs.

It was the German Meister Eckhart, 1260-1327, who designated the springhead of temporal and eternal fusion as the "foundation" in the soul; here the Eternal is ever begotten and born anew, here the "spark of God" illumines and gives true "knowledge" and true "love" in superabundance. This being reborn to light, knowledge, and love was for Luther the begetting of grace, faith, and love, these three, in the final analysis inseparable. This mystical experience led him to the discovery of the crucial reality in man, "*die Gottförmigkeit*," the "God-likeness" of the will. Here, as in the prototype Christ, the spiritual and corporeal commingle and man mirrors the divine.

Johannes Tauler, 1300-1361, disciple of Meister Eckhart, exerted an even more direct influence upon Luther. The theory of the One, becoming differentiated and radiating into the many, and the many uniting in the One, this thought of descent and ascent, held by Plotinus and Eckhart, is a basic conception in Tauler. Its meaning is that the way to a truly religious life is the way of the great Passion and Calvary. The way to God is the way of suffering. Grace comes through torment, agony, and need. It comes in "bitter bitterness," in the painful annihilation of the selfish self. And preparing to receive God, Tauler had first to slough all sense experience, be neither subject nor object, and to root out of heart and mind all feeling, thought, image, or fantasy. He had to be as "nothing" if he would become "one with the One."

Luther's "hidden" God is not the God of Tauler. Tauler's unknown God does not reveal Himself. Luther's "*deus absconditus*" is the God who reveals Himself in His paradoxical being and is active in contrasts. Tauler, eager in his efforts to glorify God, adhered to the Roman: "*facere quod in se est*," and thus placed the beginning of the religious process in man. Furthermore, Meister Eckhart's "diminutive spark" and his "foundation of the soul," which Tauler accepted, in fact erect a bridge, ever so delicate and infinitesimal, from man to God. Luther rejected the theory of a "spark" in the soul as well as any reaching out to God in the "foundation" of the soul. All of man is flesh, that is, sinful; any "spark" or "foundation" in the soul is flesh. All of man is reborn and made anew. Therefore man can not possibly initiate his salva-

tion. In the Christian religion, all beginning, middle, and end come from God.

Like the mysticist, Luther sought salvation through the personal inward experience of being apprehended, of being possessed by and surrendered to the God of all Being. Religion was more than dogma to him. It was a personal, conscious living in the moment, in a moment unrepeated in just that way. He cried out for a personal consciousness of God, not merely for the vague awareness of Him in the general, typical manner of a religious rite, in which recurrence and repetition are common to all.

In Luther the individual as a personality, the "I" ensnared in its own problematical existence, came to the fore. He agreed with Meister Eckhart that the "I," the ego, must die if there is to be union with God. For man's wilful self is God's most strongly entrenched enemy. But he could not acquiesce in Meister Eckhart's "minutest spark," presumed to be the bearer of God. For this "spark" is concentrated expressly in the most refined and hidden recess of this "I" in the soul, and is therefore depraved together with man in his totality.

Luther found no assurance in the mysticists' exposition of the union with "the One." When he inquired of them how one "felt" and how one "knew" that harmony with the will of God had been achieved, he was, as he later said, driven to "madness" in his anxiety and terror by Bonaventura's accounts of the "*unio mystica*." St. Paul then taught him that man fruitlessly seeks to win the love of God by self-centered self-denial, self-discipline, and surrender. Union with God takes place only when God in His great, all-embracing will and love gives man everything; when He forgives all sin, and Himself seeks man out, renews him, and makes him the instrument of His will.

The *Freedom of a Christian Man* sets forth Luther's mystical view: "Therefore whosoever clings to Him in right faith, his soul is so completely united with Him, that all power of the Word is made the soul's own. And thus, by the Word, through faith the soul is made holy, just, veritable, peaceful, free, and full of all goodness, a true child of God. . . As is the Word, thus is the soul fashioned by it, even as the iron glows with the fire with which it is fused. We see therefore, that faith is sufficient unto a Christian

man, requires no works to make him pious. If no works are required, he is surely released of all laws and commandments. And if released, he is certainly free. . . that does not imply that we be idle or do evil . . . for the soul is united with Christ as a bride with her bridegroom . . . Christ and the soul become one, and the possessions of both are held in common, fortune and misfortune, and all things, so that, whatever Christ owns is made the soul's own; and whatever the soul possesses is made Christ's own. Thus the Christian has all things and all felicity."⁶⁹

To live in the Invisible, so desirable to the mysticist, was to Luther rather to live in the revelation of God, in grace, in the Word. "To live in the hidden places" was to him rather to live in complete trust in God's mercy. Faith enters the dark places where the soul is united with the invisible, inexpressible Word of God. Mysticism soared beyond revelation and hoped for communion with the Invisible; Luther clung to the eternal revelation of God in "the Word." In the Word does God wish to impart of Himself and His being.

With the early German mysticists Luther believed in man's total depravity, in his inability to save himself, in the necessity of renunciation of self, in the import of the cross and suffering, in the annihilation of the old Adam and the need of rebirth in the spirit, mediated through surrender to Christ. However, whereas German mysticism stressed that the Christian's greatest achievement lay in following the example of Christ, Luther emphasized that which the historical Christ had accomplished, the fact of salvation. And again, the mysticist's "spiritual begetting" was to him a rebirth in the "Word of Truth."

Significantly, Luther's religious view embraced something more than the usual mystical piety. The mystic aspires to a conscious dependence upon God, and enjoyment of unity with Him. His "activity" is directed toward one end, the attainment of a condition of inward passivity. With Luther it was not merely a question of passive surrender. His apprehension of God set all forces of the soul into passionate suspense; it was the realization of trust and faith as an active, joyous "affect," which in its very nature can not remain at rest, or be idle. It was "a living, active, mighty thing," an impulse driving forward continuously to a creative

good. This discernment was wholly new and original with Luther.

Therefore Luther's way to the *unio mystica* was one of mobility, a rising and falling in constant striving, an iterated and reiterated receiving, having, and becoming. God, the eternal Subject, makes man the passive object of His particular willing in such manner, that man, having become the passive object of God's will, wishes as subject precisely that to which God has destined him. He, the total man, is surrendered to the living God. All forces of heart and soul are radically stirred. And in this God-yieldedness, which is trust, faith, tranquillity, triumph over all doubt and fear, all hostile powers, of whatever kind and seeming strength, prove actually impotent: "May goods, child, honor go, life, name, and wife also, may all be swept away, God's truth abides for aye, and must be ours despite them."⁷⁰

THE TRIUNE GOD

Luther's course led from an encounter with the terrifying "*Deus absconditus*,"⁷¹ God hidden, majestic, to the "*Deus revelatus*,"⁷² God, the Father, whose unconditioned love sets free in Christ. In common with all Christendom Luther based his faith upon the tenet of the Triune God, "this high article of faith concerning divine Majesty, as held by the Roman Church and the Christian Church throughout the world."⁷³ God is One Being in three persons, so to speak; He reveals Himself in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This Godhead is, in Luther's words, "a supreme Unity, some call it Trinity, but that is too ridiculous,"⁷⁴ for there are not three gods, but "One Eternal God," to whom no name can apply. Yet He is the Triune God, made known in all creation. In substance and being God is the Creator, the Conceiver, Begetter, Father, the Lord God, by whom all things are made. The Word through which all things are made is the Wisdom, the Son, begotten of the Father in all eternity, born in the Oneness of Divine Being and yet diverse, distinguishable in His own singularity. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. He is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, revealed in this that He illumines and kindles our faith through the Word. He sanctifies, quickens, sustains, and is, together with the Father and the Son, of one eternal Being. "Call it whatever you will, we call

it a person, though that is not adequate, is mere stammering. . . . as we also stammer [are inarticulate] when we use the word Trinity.”⁷⁵ But what are we to do? We are not capable beyond such stammering.

Article One of the Augsburg Confession, entitled “Of God,” gives this definition: “There is one Divine Essence which is called and which is God: eternal, without body, without parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things, visible, and invisible; and yet there are three Persons, of the same essence and power, who also are co-eternal, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And the term “person” is used as the Fathers used it, to signify, not a part or quality in another, but that which subsists of itself.”⁷⁶

These are three, and yet there is but One God. “For whatever person of the Godhead one names, one names the right, true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”⁷⁷ One alike in omnipotence, majesty, and glory. With Athanasius Luther confesses to “one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal . . . The Father is made of none; neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone: not made, not created, but begotten. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. And in this Trinity none is before or after other; none is greater or less than another; but the whole three Persons are co-eternal together, and coequal: so that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.”⁷⁸

Luther frequently describes the nature and properties of the Triune God in this way: the omnipotence of God the Father expresses His substance and being; form and figure [Form und Gestalt] denote the wisdom of the Son; beneficence and fortitude [Nutz and Kraft] signify the Holy Spirit.⁷⁹ “The Father speaks ‘let there be light,’ and His Word is the person of the Son through which Word all things are made . . . all things are made through His Word and by the Spirit of His mouth.”⁸⁰ All are One: the

Lord God, from whom all things proceed and by whom all things are made; His Word, the Father's Idea assuming form in the formulated Word, and His Holy Spirit, which maintains and sanctifies all things. One God, Creator, Effector, Maintainer; Omnipotence, Wisdom, Beneficence, active in One Being.⁸¹

The Apostles' Creed compacts this faith in the Christian Triune God. The work of creation is attributed to the Father, that of salvation to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost the power of forgiving sin, of imparting strength, and of rescue from death to eternal life. Not as though the Father were the alone Creator, or the Son the alone Saviour, or the Holy Spirit the alone Sanctifier; but each is revealed in the activity peculiar to Him, and yet there is but One alone God.⁸²

The Small Catechism presents Luther's central view in its clearest and most authentic form, classical in compression and lucidity. All texts are Luther's original expositions composed in systematic summary. The First Article: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth" has this meaning according to Luther: "I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my limbs, my reason, and all my senses, and still preserves them; in addition thereto, clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and homestead, wife and children, fields, cattle and all my goods; that He provides me daily with all that I need to support this body and life, protects me from all danger, and guards me and preserves me from all evil; and all this out of pure, fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which I owe it to Him to thank, praise, serve, and obey Him. This is most certainly true."

And the meaning of the Second Article, Of Redemption: "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, etc." is thus stated by Luther: "I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won [delivered] me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, in order that I may be [wholly] His own, and live under Him in

His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true."

The Third Article, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, etc." Luther interpreted as follows: "I believe that I can not by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He forgives daily and richly all sins to me and all believers, and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will give to me and to all believers in Christ everlasting life. This is most certainly true."⁸³

Luther's world, in time and eternity, owes its existence to the Triune God. The first Creation had its origin in the Father, who is the constant source of its being. He created it through His eternal Word. The Son is the Word, by which the Father brought forth from nothing. And when the Father by His word had made Creation out of nothing, He looked upon it and by His Spirit beheld that it was good. By the Spirit in the Word by which it was created the Father took into His heart His own creation and caused it to exist constantly in the Word by the Spirit. The Spirit is the sanctifying and preserving love of God by which He takes creation into Himself and preserves it in the Word. By the love of God the Spirit upholds and sustains the whole creation.

"'And God said' indicates that the Word was with God before there was light. . . . Therefore the Word is not a thing, neither heaven nor earth, since God creates through the Word He speaks; His creating is His Word. Thus the Word is God. The Father speaks the Word and therewith expresses the being of the Son, one and eternal with Him."⁸⁴ This is the Word begotten of the Father. The Word is not made. It is spoken. Since He who speaks and that which is spoken, are diverse, the Word and the Speaker are not one person, and yet they are One God. These words surpass all human reason. The Words of God are realities, not simply

vocables. The third person, the Holy Spirit,⁸⁵ is mysteriously indicated in the words of Moses: God beheld the light and saw that it was good and was well pleased with it. God looks upon His creation with favor; and this favor, the pleasure in His creation, is nothing other than that God maintains His creatures, succors and comforts them. Thus is imputed to the Holy Spirit that He is the life and continuance of all things, that as the manifestation of the will of God this third person of the Godhead imparts to each creature its activity and effectiveness. Thus the Holy Spirit is the beneficence of the Father even as the Word is His eternal Counsel. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are designated in these three words: God created; God spake; God beheld with favor. And these three activities, three characteristics are called three persons, but are One God. God creates through the Son, who is the Word, and in the Holy Spirit, who is His divine pleasure. In other words: All things are of God, through Him, and in Him.⁸⁵

God is almighty. All good proceeds from Him. He is Love, and in His loving-kindness He pours out immeasurable and unlimited good. All else but serves this Love, which is the essence of His nature. He maintains all His creatures, He cares for them, and shows His goodness to all the world. His omnipotence is revealed in the unconditional, unlimited, and incomprehensible presence and activity in all that lives and is. The divine miracle of His Creation is as difficult to fathom as is that of the Incarnation of His Son and the miracle of continuous Sanctification in the Holy Spirit.

The visible world, the Creation of the Father created in the Holy Spirit and by His Word, is maintained by this same Holy Spirit who is man's Comforter in distress, by whom man actually lives and breathes, and by whose presence all creatures are made glad. Luther can think only in terms of the Holy Trinity, that is to say, in terms of biblical Christianity. For Luther the Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification are inextricably interwoven in one and the same revelation and act of God. The Holy Spirit who calls from death to life, who sustains in faith in the risen Christ, the Redeemer, who sits on the right hand of the Father, the Creator, whose "fatherly, divine goodness and mercy" protects and

preserves all things, all are active in that Creation which brings forth man, the lilies in the fields, the birds on wing, the earth, the winds, and sky.

*God, the Creator and Father,
Immanent in His Creation*

The majesty, eternity, the exaltation, the love, the tenderness of God are, to be sure, revealed most clearly, though only in part, by the Holy Spirit through the Mediator, Christ Jesus. But by this very revelation the love of God is now recognizable in the work of His Creation. In grandiose composition, dithyrambic, religious, lyrical, joyous, and solemn, Luther approached the being and work of God. He felt His power, His quickening, His activity in life and in death; he was keenly sensible of God's hand in the vicissitudes of history. And with joyful heart he sang a jubilate to the winds, to the leaves, to the flowerets dancing in the sun. Not as a pantheist. But as a Christian, exuberant in thanksgiving. Whereas pantheism is usually static and assigns limits and localization to the presence of the Deity, Luther took perfect delight in the omnipresence of God, mobile, indefatigable, potent, almighty in creation upon creation, never at rest, never confined. Over against the pantheistic God *in* all things, Luther's God and Creator is over all, outside all, underneath all, through and throughout all things and at all ends. He is the most singular, most present, and at the same time most distant, most exalted power, creating and maintaining His creations, caring for them, loving them as a Father, dispensing life and blessing without end. "We assert that God is not a Being of such and such extent, length, width, thickness, height, depth, but a supernatural, inscrutable Being, simultaneously, totally in every kernel, and yet in all, and above all, and outside all creatures; therefore He can not be hedged round, as the mind dreams; for a body is much, much too spacious for the Godhead, and many thousand Godheads could be therein; on the other hand, however, also much, much too confined, so that not one Godhead can be in it."⁸⁶ Such a God is He, that He "lets all creatures enjoy His gentle beneficence."

Luther enters the workshop of God and observes Him, a permeating, restlessly active, pressing force in all that happens; He

is the quickening power, which works in all creatures; He is active in the godless as well as in Satan. His omnipotence is everywhere and yet nowhere. "The Scriptures teach us that the right hand of God is not a particular place . . . but is the omnipotence of God, which can be nowhere and yet must be simultaneously in all places . . . a particular place would have to be tangible and limited . . . Divine power, however, can and may be neither limited nor measured. For it is incomprehensible and immeasurable, beyond and above all that is and can be."⁸⁷ Therefore one ought not "to imagine God sitting up in heaven on a golden throne in purple and golden robes, with golden sceptre and crown; but as a ruler, maintaining all things, filling everything, present in all creatures, creating and doing all things in all, holding all in His hands."⁸⁸ For in Luther's words God does not say, "'A part of heaven is my seat, a part or place in the earth is my footstool,' but thus does God speak, 'Whatever and wherever heaven is, there is my seat . . . whatever or wherever earth is . . . there is my footstool.'"⁸⁹ Indeed, in this passage Isaiah fearlessly asserts that God is "actually present in all ends and throughout all creatures in all their parts and places, so that the world is full of God and He fills it completely. However, He is not enclosed or embraced by it, but is also at the same time outside and above all creation."⁹⁰ Because He moves all things, He is immanent in all; because His power creates all things, it is absolute and transcendental, remote and not remote.

He is the Absolute Being, who participates and moves in the universe, in the life of the world, in the human spirit. He is incapable, nothing comes to pass except He decree it and be present. He is inscrutable and incomprehensible. He enfolds all, He penetrates all, His creative might is the Source of all life and all good. He is nearer each one of us than we are to each other, or even to ourselves. "If He has found a way in which His own divine Being can be entirely in all creatures and in each one in particular, deeper, more inward and more present than the creature is to itself and yet again is nowhere, and can and may be compassed in none by none, so that indeed He compasses all things and is in them, but none compasses Him and is in Him: should this same one," asks Luther, "not know a way to be present in body in

many places at the same time, and yet none of these places be the one where He is? Alas, we wretched children of men, who judge God and His deeds according to our vanity and think Him a shoemaker or a day laborer."⁹⁰ He creates all things out of nothing, through divine communion with Himself. "In His Majesty and in His nature God is pregnant with the Word, the thought of His heart, a converse, which in His holy being He holds with Himself. It is as replete, as magnificent, as perfect as God Himself. None other than He alone sees, hears, and comprehends this communion. . . . The Word is before all angels, it is before all creatures; through this converse and Word He imparts being to all creatures."⁹¹ And His nature, in Luther's words, is "nothing but a furnace and conflagration of love."⁹²

The divine immanence of God the Creator is the foundation of the world's being and continuance. "All things must be God's, and where He does not initiate, nothing can be or become; where He ceases, nothing can exist; for He did not build the world as a carpenter builds a house and then leaves it to itself as it is; but remains with it and maintains everything as He has made it, else it could neither stand nor remain."⁹³ In His Creation and creatures we are to praise the magnanimity, goodness, and wisdom of God. Luther's refined sensibility noted the wonder, the purpose, the beauty of Creation: the firmament, plants, animals, even mice and midges extol Him. All creatures are good, 1 Tim. 4, 3f., and we ought to thank God that in them He presents Himself in His omnipotence and benevolence. Therefore we should revere the Creator and Father, the Source of all earthly creation, and value and enjoy and use His handiwork according to His will. Let faith have regard to the floweret, the starry heavens, and turn to Him. "If you would know God, see Him, or even touch him, behold and give heed to yourselves. You are the work of God, and His works are in you, among you, through you."⁹⁴

"God is bound to no place, He is excluded from none; He is present in all places, even in the least creature, in the leaf of the tree, the blade of grass, and yet He is nowhere. Nowhere is to be understood in its reference to the tangible and limited. He is everywhere, for He creates, effects, and maintains all things, He is present in each creature in twofold manner . . . in His very

presence and in His substance.”⁹⁵ “He himself must be present and create and maintain His creature in its inmost and outmost form.”⁹⁶ In His absoluteness, His omnipotence the Creator must be in all places, “even in the most insignificant leaf. For this reason: it is God who creates, fashions, and maintains all things by His almighty power and right hand, as our faith confesses. He sends out no stewards or angels, when He creates and maintains, since all that is the work peculiar to His own divine power. He must therefore be in every single creature . . . in its innermost, outermost, around and about, through and through, under it and above it, before and aft, so that there can be nothing more present nor more inward in all creatures than God Himself in His might.”⁹⁷ The word “might” denotes not a quiescent power, but “a creative might and constant activity, which is incessantly active and in flux. God does not rest, He is continuously effective.”⁹⁸ Thus does Luther’s poetic genius transform the “substance” of medieval metaphysics into a vitalism, energy, effectiveness, into an active, willing, personal aspect of the Being that is God.

No reason can comprehend God, the Creator, who is above all, beyond body and spirit and all one can say and think, and at the same time He is wholly present in all. “How can reason suffer that divine Majesty be so insignificant, that it be present in substance in a granule, around a granule, above and through it, inwardly and outwardly? And though it is One Majesty, it is still entirely and wholly in every particle and particular . . . thus must the whole divine power be present, in and around the granule in all parts . . . yet, that same Majesty is so great that neither this world nor a thousand worlds could compass it and say: Behold, there it is.”⁹⁹ Though logic must fail before the boldness of the thought, the transcendent God is in His reality everywhere at every moment actively present with His works and will, in every stir of the leaf on the tree. “God is a supernatural, mysterious Being, who nonetheless is entirely in each kernel, and yet is in all and over all and beyond all creatures . . . nothing is so small but God is smaller, nothing so great, but God is still greater . . . and is an ineffable Being over and beyond all that we can name or think.”¹⁰⁰ And this God, ineffable and inscrutable, is present in all things, “even in the most diminutive leaf and poppy seed.”¹⁰¹ The world, cloak-

ing the immanent Godhead, springs forth in new splendor and beauty, and a joyous day breaks upon it in Luther's own voyage of discovery. "We have come to the dawn of eternal life, we are beginning again to know the creatures . . . we are beginning by the grace of God to recognize His glorious works and wonders."¹⁰²

Nature is the fire sent forth from God's eternal will. He breathes His living breath into it every moment, it is "His Word." To be sure, there are laws of nature, but these are by the Word of God who made them and can again abrogate them. God does not bring forth and create by a process of succession. When He said, "let us make man," He created all men from the beginning to the end of the world. "In God there is no earlier or later, no fast or slow, but before His eyes all is presence. For He is simply outside the category of time."¹⁰³ From all eternity He created and creates what we behold in time. "Be on your guard when you hear these words: "and God said," for they are not fleeting words as we speak them; but know that it is an eternal Word, spoken from all eternity, continuously, and forever. As impossible as it is that God's being should cease, so impossible is it that His speaking cease . . . He still speaks continuously and pulsates in all things ceaselessly; for no creature has its being of itself. Therefore, as long as a creature endures, so long does the Word endure; as long as the earth brings forth or is able to bring forth, so long does God speak . . . All creatures in their being and activity are without ceasing impelled by the Word of God."¹⁰⁴ For every blade and every grass is "the mask of the Godhead."¹⁰⁵

But God is not wholly revealed nor is He comprehended in His Creation. Over and over Luther stresses that the Godhead of God is unknowable. In His Majesty, in His Holiness He remains inaccessible. And if we were to castigate our bodies and shatter our limbs, and if we were to beat our heads without ceasing against boulders and strongholds, yet would God in His Being remain unknowable and incomprehensible. Nothing is more deceptive than man's vain presumption that "God in His nakedness" can be found by human effort.

God is actually apprehended in a deed of love, in which the All-Being One limited Himself, became flesh in space, and the Eternal

One revealed Himself in time. "And although I can say of all creatures: God is here, or God is present therein, yet can I not say: that is God Himself. But of Christ faith does not only say that God is in Him, but speaks in this manner: Christ is God Himself."¹⁰⁶ God reveals Himself in His fullness, in His essential Being, in His love, in Christ Jesus.

God, the Son, Jesus Christ, Saviour and Lord

Even as the Triune God participates in the work of Creation, so are the three Persons active in the work of Redemption. Though the Father is the source of a continuous Creation, He is also the source of the salvation of man. He calls His children to Him by the Word in order that they may not perish. According to Luther, no creature born into this world can live except by the love of the Father, who through the Spirit and by His Word holds each and all in His everlasting arms. In like manner no sinner can stand alone except the Father by His love and through the Holy Spirit take him unto Himself in Christ. The Creation and the Redemption are the work of the Triune God.

As Luther warred with the dark powers of fear and doubt in his search for a "merciful God," a new meaning of Christ the Saviour was revealed to him. Christ frees from sin, above all from the one supreme sin of contending with God. In his wrestling with God, the requirement that the Law be fulfilled and the consciousness of his own inability to obey the commands of God terrified him and aggravated his sense of guilt. His conscience knew that each attempt to fulfill the Law by his own effort was presumption, and in the end despair engulfed him. Contention and consequent despair spring from doubt, for he who contends does not in faith possess the object of his contention. As soon as Luther found the Christ who neither instils fear nor threatens punishment, but comforts and saves, he knew the way to God to be through love in Christ.

CHRIST, THE PERSON

In the Incarnation in Christ, God, the Illimitable and Unlimited One, was made manifest in limitation, in time and space. He assumed concrete form in a special and unique way in one particular

and unrepeatable moment in history. God took on form in the flesh and in Jesus Christ reconciled the world unto Himself. According to Luther's *Small Catechism* Jesus, the only Saviour of all mankind, and Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed, anointed with the Holy Ghost without measure, our Prophet, Priest, and King, is true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary.

It was of momentous importance to Luther that God was actually born, that He assumed flesh. Mary was rather to be thought of as a personal "ornament." The miraculous birth of Christ, and such it was to Luther, stresses His uniqueness: He is the only one thus born. There is none other like Him in all time and eternity. Words must forever fail to convey adequately and clearly that in His Person, in His work, in the reconciliation and redemption He won for us, in the love He pours forth for us, He became our Saviour and Lord, and that as such He is both God and Man.

Next to the article of faith of the Holy Trinity, Luther considered as the greatest mystery in heaven and on earth that "God was made manifest in the flesh," that in Christ the divine and human nature are personally united with one another, so that "in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "That God not only is in Him, but also dwells in Him, so that God and Man are one person, that is the exalted work and miracle of God, which makes reason a bauble, and to which faith alone must cling."¹⁰⁷

In virtue of the "union and communion" of the two natures in Him, Christ manifested His divine Majesty when and as He willed in the miracles which He performed after His resurrection and ascension as well as in His "state of humiliation," that is, in His earthly life from His conception by the Holy Ghost to His burial. Also in death He revealed His divine Majesty, for He died not simply as any other man, but in and with His death He conquered sin, death, devil, hell, and eternal damnation. His human nature alone could not have accomplished this; but, united with His divine nature, Christ in His whole Person defeated all forces of evil wherever found.

It is Luther's conviction¹⁰⁸ that Christ, after the resurrection from the dead, laid aside entirely the form of a servant which He assumed in His earthly life. He did not, however, lay aside His

human nature; but retains it to eternity in the full possession and use of His divine Majesty. And since He ascended above all heavens, He truly fills all things and is everywhere present. He rules from sea to sea and to the ends of the earth not only as God, but also as Man.

Furthermore, according to Luther, "whatever this person, Christ, speaks and does, that is the speech and performance of both, true God and true man, thus, that all His words and deeds refer to the whole person; and this is not to be sundered, as if He were not true God, or not true man; yet in such manner, that one recognize His nature in its several parts and believe. For if one wishes to speak of His actual nature and the several parts one must say: God is by nature other than man; and the human nature is not of eternity, as is the divine. The divine is not born in time as is the human, and yet both are fused in one person, so that there is One Christ. And it may be said of Him: The Man is God; and the Man is He, who created all things: even as in a natural, pure human being body and soul are two distinguishable natures, and yet are one person or one man."¹⁰⁹

The divine and the human nature in the Person of Christ are so united with one another, that they have "sublime, intimate, ineffable communion" with one another without however commingling or being equalized in their essences. In Christ two distinct natures exist and remain unchanged and unconfused in their natural essence and properties, and yet the two natures are actually one person; therefore that which is an attribute of one nature is ascribed not to that nature alone, as separate, but to the entire Person, which is at the same time God and Man. "In one person, Christ is at once God and man. Whatever befalls and happens to his person which is Christ, befalls and happens also to this God and man. Thus it comes about that each of these two natures in Christ imparts to the other its peculiar idiom and specific character; that is . . . they hang one in the other and are so entwined and united that neither can be divided or separated from the other . . . In such manner, that not alone man, but also the Son of God, or the real, true God, is born."¹¹⁰

However, it does not follow that what is ascribed to the person is at the same time a property of both natures. In the controversy

with Zwingli about the real presence of Christ's body and blood in Holy Communion, Luther adhered to the words, "this *is* my body," "this *is* my blood," and maintained that Christ is present "in, with, and under" the bread and wine. The eating and drinking is both "natural and spiritual, that is, sacramental." Luther's emphasis accentuated that the grammatical sense of the words uttered by Christ at the Last Supper establishes truth, and not human logic primarily. Zwingli's theory, which he called "*alloeosis*," upheld the view that frequently what is said of the divinity of Christ really belongs to His humanity or vice versa. In the passage in St. Luke 24: 26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" Zwingli, for instance, was certain that the word "Christ" had reference to His human nature alone. Luther was compelled to dissent: "Beware, beware, I say, of the *Alloeosis*! It is the devil's mask, for in the end it constructs such a Christ in the following of whom I certainly should not be a Christian; namely, henceforth Christ would be no more and do no more with His sufferings and life than any other mere saint. For if I permit myself to be persuaded that only the human nature suffered for me, then is Christ a poor Saviour and indeed Himself needs a Saviour . . . If reason should say, 'the Godhead can not suffer and die,' you shall reply, that is true; yet, because in Christ divinity and humanity are one person, the Scriptures, because of such personal union, have the Godhead also participate in everything which befalls the human nature, and vice versa. And it is so in reality. You must certainly answer this that the person [Christ] suffers and dies. Now the person is true God; therefore it is rightly said: the Son of God suffers. For although the one part, so to speak, namely, the divinity, does not suffer, yet the person, which is God, suffers in the other part, namely, in His humanity. For in truth God's Son has been crucified for us, that is, the person which is God. For the person, the person, I say, was crucified according to His human nature."¹¹¹ Luther's Christ is unified and one in person.

As all of man endures pain in the illness of a member of the body, thus the God-Man Christ suffers when His human nature is afflicted. The Person which is God is crucified as Man. Luther's exegesis continues: "If the *Alloeosis* is to stand as Zwingli teaches

it, then Christ will have to be two persons, one divine and one human, for Zwingli applies the passages concerning suffering to the human nature alone, and deflects them entirely from the divinity. If the works be parted and separated, the person must also be divided, since all the works or sufferings are ascribed not to the natures, but to the person. It is the person that does and suffers everything, one thing according to one nature, and another according to the other nature. . . . Therefore we regard our Lord Christ as God and Man in one person, so that we neither confound the natures nor divide the person."¹¹²

Luther's tract *Of the Councils and the Church* throws further light upon his position: "We Christians must know that if God is not also in the balance and gives the weight, we shall sink to the bottom with our scale. By this I mean: if this be not true that God died for us rather than only a man, we should be lost. But if "God's death" and "God died" lie in the scale of the balance, then He sinks down and we rise up as a light, empty scale. Indeed He can also rise again and leap out of the scale; yet He could not sit in the scale unless He became a man like us, so that it could be said: "God died," "God's passion," "God's blood," "God's death." In His nature God can not die; but now that God and man are united in one person, it is correctly called God's death, when the man dies who is one thing or one person with God."¹¹³

To Luther, then, Christ is our Mediator, Redeemer, King, High Priest, Lord, not according to one nature only, but according to both natures. Since in God there is no change, the divine nature in Christ, in its essence and properties, suffered no subtraction, no addition, was neither increased nor diminished by the Incarnation. The human nature in Christ, however, when it was glorified and exalted to the right hand of God, did receive, apart from, over, and above its natural properties, special, high, supernatural, heavenly prerogatives and excellences in majesty, glory, and might above everything that can be named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and this, because of the fact that His humanity has been personally united with His divinity.

The human nature in Christ has power and efficacy in the exercise of the functions of His office, not only according to its own qualities, but chiefly from the majesty, glory, and might derived

from the personal union with His divine nature. Thus the Man Christ is capable beyond the ability of His assumed human nature. For to quicken, to have all judgment and all power in heaven and on earth, to have all things in His hands, to have all things in subjection beneath His feet, to take away sin, are of heavenly, infinite might and majesty, which, according to the Scriptures, have been given and imparted to the God-Man Christ. However, Luther would have it clearly understood, that the divine power, life, and glory was given to the human nature in Christ not in such a way as the Father from eternity communicated His essence and divine attributes to the Son according to His divine nature—for, in His divine nature Christ is of one substance with the Father and is equal to and one with God. As Man, however, Christ is beneath God. To prevent all confusion or any attempt to equalize the natures in Christ, Luther took infinite pains to make clear that the power to quicken is not in the Man Christ in the same manner in which it inheres in His divine nature. It is an essential property in His divinity. It is imparted to His humanity. Also, though His human nature is invested with divine power, it does not in turn communicate human attributes to the divine.

This firm belief impels Luther to declare that, in personal union with the divine, the human nature in Christ is endowed with infinite majesty; that the entire fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily—"as in its own body"—so that it shines forth with all its majesty, power, glory, and efficacy in the assumed human nature, voluntarily, when and as He wills.

His divine majesty was concealed and withheld for the greater part of His life on earth. But now, after the form of the servant has been laid aside, it is fully, powerfully, and publicly exercised in heaven and on earth. And in the life to come we shall behold this His glory from face to face. Thus there is and remains in Christ only one divine omnipotence, power, majesty, and glory, which is peculiar to the divine nature alone. But it shines, manifests, and exercises itself fully, yet voluntarily, in, with, and through the assumed, exalted human nature in Christ.

He "sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty," in the glory of His Godhead. And "the right hand of God" is not a special place where a body might be as "on a golden seat; but is

the almighty power of God, which can be nowhere and yet must be at the same time in all places.”¹¹⁴ In pure delight in this thought, so releasing, so stirring, Luther felt urged to repeated analysis: “The body of Christ is on the right hand of God, that is well known. But the right hand of God is in all ends . . . therefore it is also most certainly in the bread and wine. . . . Wherever the right hand of God is, there must the body and blood of Christ be, for the right hand of God can not be divided into many parts, but is a single, unified Being.”¹¹⁵ This can have but one clear meaning, namely, that Christ “also as man rules over all things and all things are subject to Him. Therefore He must be near by, within and around, and have all things in His hands, etc. For according to His Godhead nothing has been given Him nor anything put beneath His feet, since He previously made all things and maintains them. But to sit on the right hand of God is the same as to rule and to have power over all things. If He in truth has power and rules, then He must, to be sure, be present in Being through the right hand of God, which is everywhere.”¹¹⁶

So closely is Christ tied into the Trinity that the concepts of the Being and work of Father and Son intermingle. As God, Christ created and creates and maintains all things; as Man He creates nothing, yet “all creatures are subject to Him.” As the Exalted One He is the King who gives form to all life and rules over all; His is the promise, “Ask and ye shall receive.” Christ “is God Himself”; in these words faith “glorifies God.” That means, that “I believe in Him, know Him to be faithful and true, wise, just, merciful, almighty, in sum: acknowledge Him as the source and dispenser of every good.”¹¹⁷

Finally, it is well to remember that only in the realm of man, that is, in the realm of revelation, can there be any thought or need of defining divine qualities. “We however know that the power of God, His Arm, Hand, Being, Countenance, Spirit, Wisdom, etc. are all one thing, for outside the creature there is nothing but one pure and simple Godhead Itself.”¹¹⁸ God is One in Being, uncompounded, effective, incomprehensible, inscrutable. Christ Jesus, the Infinite in the Finite, is God and Man in one Unity, Indivisible, Eternal. “Indeed, that is the right, Christian chief doctrine and conviction, that [we] be certain and know,

that the Man, Christ, truly and actually is in God, and God in Him, in such manner that He Himself is the true, living God. And second, that the same, who is in God and God in Him, is also in us and we in Him. Whoever grasps this and knows it in all truth, he possesses it entirely."¹¹⁹ Such, in Luther's theology, is the Son, the second Person of the Holy Trinity.

THE WORK OF CHRIST

RECONCILIATION AND REDEMPTION

"Who say ye that I am?" The answer to this question determines the religion, the life of him who answers it. Luther's answer was unequivocal and fundamental: Christ the Redeemer is the necessary propitiation of the wrath of God toward sinful man; He took away the guilt and therewith the judicial displeasure of God by offering Himself as the expiation for our sins. Reconciliation and redemption are the work and office of Jesus Christ.

The fathomless mercy of the Father sent His Son into the world, that in Christ He, the Eternal One, be made visible in time, that Christ establish reconciliation between God and man. From eternity the love of the Father decreed the salvation of the sinner, decreed, in Luther's words, that "His Son take upon Himself the sin of the world, that He die for it, that He conciliate the wrath of God by overcoming death and the devil and thus win man for Himself."¹²⁰ By His suffering, death, and resurrection He accomplished the redemption of man and secured forever the kingdom of God in us, which is the realm of grace.

The reality of Christ was deeply engraved on Luther's consciousness. He never ceased marvelling that Christ, the Son of God, became flesh for us; nor could the wonder ever end that the Logos came into this earthly life and subjected Himself to it in suffering and death; above all, that He, who is God, divested Himself of His power, might, majesty, and glory, and was born in a manger. Luther could not turn his gaze from Him who stands unmatched as the paragon of excellence and grace in His surrender to the eternal purposes of God the Father, nor from Him whose humility is at every moment sublime. In the person of Christ he saw revealed the uniqueness of the love of God which establishes the course of the divine on earth: all life shall pass

through death; there shall be no resurrection and no ascension into heaven except through death and burial. And this the God-Man proffers as a sign and seal of this love: where God dwells there is suffering; the triumph of God begets obedience.

The Incarnation came to pass because man is born in sin and lives and dies under the burden of this guilt unto eternal death. "Outside Christ" death, devil, and sin are in his heart, and in this state he is "lost and damned eternally." For God demands that His Law be fulfilled and preserved. The Law of God, as understood by Luther, is the Good, willed by God. It is the Mosaic Law as well as the natural law, "written in man's heart." It is more than that. It is the Law of God, the Holy One, which is the Spirit, the Good as absolute, actual Holiness.

Man has not kept this Law of God. And, according to Luther, he is totally guilty. In his wilfulness and pride he became estranged from God and is now confronted with the demand of the Law: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."¹²¹ And again: "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy."¹²² Who can be holy as is the holy God? Who can keep His holy Law? The answer is: "There is none that doeth good, no, not one."¹²³ None can fulfill the First Commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me,"¹²⁴ for the one demand of all Law is love: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and "thy neighbor as thyself."¹²⁵ Being "abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work a reprobate,"¹²⁶ all men are guilty of sin before God. "None is good, save one, that is, God."¹²⁷ There is thus salvation in one alone — in God Himself.

The power of sin is for Luther a fact beyond all comprehension. Sin is something extraordinarily positive which lies between God and man, not a mere idea, not just a chasm or vacuum. Sin disturbs the order of God, His lawful design expressed in His inescapable Majesty and Judgment. And of necessity this majestic order crushes him who, though subject to it, is unable to submit. The Law of God crushes him who, in denying, does not fulfill it.

To fail in the total fulfillment of the Law is to suffer the curse and damnation, the judgment, the wrath of God, which the Law pronounces upon sin. The wrath of God is "eternal" and "irre-

vocable," for it springs from His justice and righteousness. His justice is a stern reality within His divine Being, the ethical-spiritual necessity in the cosmos, as Luther thought of it. Therefore, the wrath of God is "no imaginary thing," and no "fiction," but is the "powerful, austere, ineffable, infallible, unchangeable severity of God in respect to and against sin."¹²⁸

To Luther the Law is never a "mere letter," the simple logic of the words, which man believes himself capable of fulfilling. It is a spiritual Law, which was fulfilled once, namely, in Christ Jesus. And for us fulfillment is possible in faith alone, through union with Christ. Christ was sent to sinners and to them he offers salvation. Therefore, wherever there is no recognition of sin, of self-will, and wilfulness over against the will of God, no Christian theology is possible. The acknowledgment of sin or its denial determines the difference between theology and philosophy. Luther began his lectures on the Letter to the Romans by "magnifying the guilt of sin." If sin were insignificant or did not matter, we should not need Christ. If our own works could save us, then indeed Christ died in vain. In Christ alone and by the grace of God can man say: "I am a sinner," "naked" of all merit before God. None but the "spiritual sinner" knows the need of a Redeemer and Saviour.

That God might remain true, faithful, and just, Christ through His voluntary sacrifice propitiated the justice of God and re-established communion between God and man. By reason of Christ He again loves man. God conciliated is the prerequisite for man's salvation. Without reconciliation there can be no redemption. Outside the Son's act of expiation for our sin, of atonement, which removes sin and exposedness to punishment, there is no salvation, no forgiveness of sin, no freedom, no Gospel. Upon this basis God pours out His gifts upon men reborn and regenerated; He gives them eyes to see where others do not see; endows with strength that is mighty in weakness; and sends the Holy Spirit to awaken faith. He makes men His co-workers, that through Him they perform the task to which He has called them. And the terrors of death, devil, and the Law retreat and vanish. This is salvation. It is as real as the reconciliation. It is a fact, a deed, an effective strength in Christ, the Reconciler and Redeemer.

To Luther's mind it is of a part with the office of Jesus Christ, Saviour and Lord, that He brings us from Satan to God, from death to life, from sin to righteousness, and that He maintains us therein. Although through grace God does not ascribe our sins to us, He nonetheless did not desire to do this until all things demanded by His Law and His righteousness were done to overflowing; such ascription by grace must previously be bought and secured for us from His righteousness. Therefore, since that was impossible for us, He ordained His Son that He in our stead take upon Himself all penalty which we deserved, that He fulfill for us the Law and thus turn from us divine judgment and conciliate His wrath.

Christ in His Person took upon Himself our sin and the curse of sin. In His baptism God laid the sins of the world upon Him and placed upon Him the curse of a conscience laden with sin. "In His tender, innocent heart He had to feel God's wrath and judgment against sin; He had to taste eternal death and damnation for us, in sum, He had to suffer everything, which a condemned sinner deserved and has to suffer eternally."¹²⁹

Luther looked upon the Passion of Christ as a very real struggle with Satan, sin, and death. Therefore he did not consider the Incarnation simply the embodiment of an ethical ideal in flesh and blood. Rather does it have to do with the grim and stern reality of sin, death, the full penalty, all the suffering, all the retribution, all expiation that is the wages of sin. For the enemies of the Law must be vanquished if it is to be fulfilled.

Christ fulfilled the Law. He submitted to the curse of the Law on the cross, even though He was not under the Law, but was and is the Lord of the Law. Voluntarily He was put under the Law; voluntarily He fulfilled it. With a "spontaneity of heart" He willed and performed the Good which God wills. Out of love for us, He brought to naught the powers which enslaved us. He overcame sin and it disappeared "like a spark of fire in the sea." Death attacked Him, but He turned and set upon it and instantly death was "swallowed up." Hell — which is "death in time" — opened its yawning jaws to devour Him, but He destroyed hell, sin, death, and devil, in short, the consequences begotten of our disobedience to the Law.

Only as Man could Christ take upon Himself our sin and become our propitiation; yet as Man alone He could not have borne the sins of the world, He could not have taken upon Himself the guilt of our transgression and paid the penalty in the Passion in Gethsemane and on Golgotha. God alone can take away sin. Only as God could He become our Reconciler and Redeemer. For the sphere in which God's relation to man is decided lies beyond human strength and will.

He paid the penalty in bitterness of pain on the cross, when, brought to extremity, He cried out in the words of Psalm 22: 2: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" He felt Himself forsaken of God, forsaken of light, righteousness, life, peace, blessedness, and all that is good, and delivered over to sin, darkness, despair, death, damnation.¹³⁰ But, as Luther points out, He addresses God and is therefore not actually forsaken of Him. Surely, however, he continues, no human heart, confined and constricted, can understand its meaning. For the Saviour, in suffering the eternal wrath of God, was made to suffer like unto the damned in hell. It was an infernal agony He endured in His death hour, an anguish of soul which Luther interpreted as belonging to His life in the body. Therefore was He made Man that in His body He suffer for the world's sin.

If the death of the Redeemer appeared as the triumph of death, such hostile rejoicing was but momentary. For Luther's exposition reads on, "having been quickened in His grave," "He descended into hell" where "He exhibited Himself as its Conqueror and triumphed over all His infernal enemies."¹³¹ His "descent into hell" was thus "our Lord's" glorious victory over death and Satan. He was still the Son of God and in His suffering and death overcame the curse of the Law.

Joy and sorrow shared in the Saviour's death. Joyously, fervently He willed that the will of God be done. He suffered untold agony when the burden of sin, the demanded sacrifice seemed too great to bear. Yet throughout His suffering He knew Himself to be in harmony with the will of God. Therefore the death of Christ was to Luther the deed accomplished in complete obedience in freedom. Fundamentally it was the "supreme atonement" required by the righteousness of God. Luther does not stress "the

blood of Christ," but rather that His death is in all truth the price He paid for us, a unique ransom, the only propitiation, expiation, penance consonant with the justice of God. Christ died that we might not die; His death is "the death of death," the end of suffering through His suffering, the end of punishment through His punishment, the end of humiliation through His humiliation, so that death has become life, penalty has become freedom, suffering joyousness, and humiliation has been made into glory. Thus through the Passion of Christ, suffering and death assumed a new meaning.

It must be clear then, that Luther's understanding of the Atonement is diametrically opposed to Anselm's theory of satisfaction. Anselm, Italian ecclesiastic, 1033-1109, believed that God will grant pardon if man offers satisfaction for his sins. This he can do by accepting the atonement bought by his Redeemer, who by His suffering and death satisfied God for the sins of man. Luther objects to the interpretation of penance done, and offered by, the penitent as satisfaction, whether found in Anselm, St. Augustine, or Scholasticism. According to Luther it is Christ who, by His suffering and death, offers satisfaction, atonement, not man. His righteousness, His alien righteousness, His righteousness outside us, not our own, is our salvation become real within us through faith. Christ died for us, and therein His death is our death, His fruit our fruit, His merit is our merit. His grace can now impart forgiveness of sin and impute His righteousness. In His obedience to the demands of God He became our righteousness, and thereby He was given unto us, and His passion, His piety, and all His virtue are altogether ours. More than that, Christ, the Holy Spirit, God in His actuality — not as a remote, abstract substance — but in His reality, dwells in us.

Such was Luther's faith, the faith of him who knows himself to be a sinner, imperfect, wanting in the sight of the Lord, of him who has found his Saviour in Christ. Why did Christ die except for us, that we despair of our own strength and our works, that He do penance, atone for our sins, and win grace for us? He died that we might trust in Him and grasp in fullness of faith that He alone is the Son of Man whom God beholds in our stead, through whom alone He forgives our sin, is benign to us and saves us.

Only as the Reconciler is Christ the Mediator, the peacemaker between God and man, and only in Him can the first commandment—the sum of all commandments—be fulfilled. The fact of Christ, His passion, death, and resurrection, constitute the reality of the reconciliation and redemption.

The work of atonement is not finished with the death of Christ. Luther usually speaks of His death and resurrection as one. If Christ did not in the body, “with a glorified body issue from the grave,” then His work is no salvation for us. Redemption is completed only in the resurrection from the dead, and in the transfiguration and exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God. Thus alone could Christ carry out “the heart, will, and work of the Father.” Our sins are blotted out in His death, in His resurrection we are made righteous and are eternally saved. In His resurrection the Son of God incontrovertibly demonstrated His innocence, by virtue of which His death could never denote a penalty suffered for His sin—for He was without sin. It is furthermore proof “that He is the Son of God, and that His doctrine is truth; that the Father has accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world; that all believers shall rise unto eternal life.”¹³¹ Also, by His resurrection He is translated from the state of humility to the state of exaltation, where He constantly dispenses His good gifts to the believers and rules over them.

It is primarily the Godhead, God Himself, whom Luther sees in the Man Christ. He is God as eternal compassion, as Man He is the bearer, the revealer of God. This God-Man directs us to the Father. He alone. That is the will of God. And in His Godhead He is our King and Lord, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, who mightily rules over all creatures, who is the perpetual sovereign over nature and history, who protects His own and finally leads them to glory. He is our High Priest. In our stead He perfectly fulfilled the Law, sacrificed Himself for us and as our Mediator intercedes for us with His heavenly Father. As our Priest He suffered for us; as our King He gives us freedom and fortitude. Our blind eyes do not see, as Luther says, that all things obey Him and are subject to Him. On the Last Day it will be revealed. This is Luther’s belief concerning reconciliation and redemption in Christ. And it is noteworthy that the

freedom from guilt and sin achieved by the Reconciler is greater than the salvation from punishment and death which the Saviour won for us.

Luther's convictions led him to a further conclusion, adamant and inflexible in its certitude: the beginning of all religious life in man lies with God. For, as he says in his controversy with Erasmus in respect to man's free will, God would be foolish to have died for the sake of sin "if you in yourself were free and mighty and were able to do anything that is not sin. For whatever we do is sin and remains sin no matter how beautifully your doing succeeds. 'Thy King is coming'; you do not seek Him, He seeks you; you do not find Him, He finds you . . . your faith comes from Him, not from you, and everything wrought by faith . . . comes from Him, not from you. And where He does not come . . . and where His Gospel is not, there God is not, but pure sin and corruption alone, let the free will do, suffer, bring about, live as it wishes or wills."¹³² And to recognize such significance in Christ, the Man Christ is essential; in "utter humility" He is not proud, but permits God to do all things in all. Luther was acutely aware that a new type of man had become reality in Christ.

Thus does the sinner come to know Christ as He is: unique, wholly distinct from other men: "Thou art the holy Son of God!" In faith He is transfigured and becomes our Redeemer: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" And in Luther's words: "But to know Christ signifies to me that He was given for us; that He took upon Himself my sins. Hence I deem all my affairs as nothing and have done with all that is my own and hold to this alone, that Christ is given unto me, that His suffering, His piety, and His total righteousness are altogether mine. If I apprehend that, I must in turn love Him, since one must be devoted to such a one. By the Son I then ascend to the Father and behold that Christ is God, that He put Himself into my sin, my wretchedness, and bestows His favor upon me. I likewise come to see the good will and the supreme love of the Father, of which no heart can conceive. Thus I seize God where He is most tenderly solicitous and reflect: to be sure, that is God, indeed, it is the will of God and His pleasure, that Christ does this for me. In this countenance thus do I perceive the ineffable grace and love of God."¹³³

In this manner we come into possession of that which is His, in this manner alone are we His, and He, as the "*revelatus Deus*," is ours. Here God is God in reality: the fearsome heart is made fearless, His Word and promise are now valid and real, His victory is now our own. Where there was despair there now is faith, where there was emptiness, there now is an indwelling Christ. Where He dwells there is fullness. And His work of salvation, accomplished once in the history of mankind, is still being accomplished today and to the end of days. He dwells in us that "He may help us," that "He may serve us." He makes us strong; He is continuously active in us and creative. He is present in all.

The concept of the omnipresence of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit is one of the most magnificent, most profound of Luther's thoughts. Christ is eternal power, a living power, omnipresent, almighty. He bound Himself to the Word and sacrament in an act of self-limitation for the sake of our limited understanding. But He is also present in nature. "Examine a kernel of grain in the field and tell me how it comes about that the stalk grows out of the earth out of a single seed and produces a multitude of kernels in the ear and gives to each its form. In each small kernel there are many, many miracles, and yet they [the enthusiasts, 1526] are aware of none of it."¹³⁴ But miraculous as this is, yet more miraculous is the fact that Christ enters our hearts by the Word. And He is present in us in the manner in which "He sits on the right hand of the Father. You can not know how that comes to pass, however, your heart feels Him very well."¹³⁵ Incomprehensible to us, He is present in His entirety, in His Majesty, He, the Lord over all things. He is about us and in us and in all places. He uses small miracles to remind us of the larger ones. The miracle that He is present in fact, in actuality in the bread and wine of the Sacrament is a miracle much smaller than that He comes into our hearts. That "is a miracle great as none other."¹³⁶

Jubilantly Luther contemplated the active omnipotence of Christ in the world: "Heaven and earth are His sack! As the grain fills the sack, thus He fills all things."¹³⁷ And he exulted in the certainty that his total person was united with Christ: "Christ wishes to be in us naturally, both in soul and body . . . He in us

and we in Him . . . and He constantly transforms us, the soul in righteousness, the body in immortality.”¹³⁸ And it is His promise fulfilled “that even as Christ is in the Father, thus also am I in Christ. That is the first chief article, through which man ascends on high and beyond himself into Christ.”¹³⁹ This, to Luther, is Christ, the Reconciler, Redeemer, and Lord, whose work delivers from all evil.

God, the Holy Spirit, Comforter and Sanctifier

In His work the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, can not be separated from the Father and the Son, for the Triune God has but one work to accomplish, unified and one in the Unity of the one true God. In His Oneness God creates, redeems, and sanctifies. The Holy Spirit draws man, body and soul, into this, God’s eternal purpose. For, one with the Father and the Son in divine majesty, omnipotence, and might, the Holy Spirit is one with the eternal and unceasing act of Creation and Redemption in His work of Sanctification.

Because, in the words of Luther’s *Small Catechism*, “I can not by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him . . . the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in true faith.”¹⁴⁰ In the words of the *Large Catechism*, “the Spirit of God alone is called Holy Ghost, that is, He who has sanctified and still sanctifies us. For as the Father is called Creator, the Son Redeemer, so the Holy Ghost, by His work, must be called Sanctifier, or one that makes holy. But how is such sanctifying done? Answer: Just as the Son obtains dominion whereby He wins us, through His birth, death, resurrection, so also does the Holy Ghost effect our sanctification by the following parts, namely, by the communion of saints or the Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.”¹⁴¹

It is the particular task of the Holy Spirit to instruct us as to God’s will for us; to enlighten us in the true knowledge of God and to impart ability and discernment in spiritual matters. Unless He dwells within we can not have the right understanding, nor can we think properly either of God or man. By the gift of the living Christ He awakens faith in the Redeemer; by infusing grace

and love He grants forgiveness of sin and dwells within to sustain us in faith. In His own Being He presents Himself a living flame of faith. He is the eternal thanksgiving in the believer's heart, He makes the salvation won by the Son an actuality in us.

And He does this by means of the miracle He performs within us. Man, by his wilfull apostasy called down eternal destruction and death upon himself. But the Holy Spirit raises him who is dead in sin from death and creates a new life in him. Even as in the beginning of Creation the earth was waste and void and without form, thus must sin be laid waste and the sinner accounted as nothing before he can be reborn and enter the kingdom of heaven. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. And as in the first Creation darkness lay upon the deep, thus does the Holy Spirit move upon the deeps of darkness in man and create light.

Satan, tyrannizing the conscience in the name of the Law, terrifies the sinner by confronting him with the majesty of God in His wrath, by pointing to the dead Christ, by offering the Law in its legalism. He invites the transgressor to depend upon his own righteousness, to make a mockery of the risen Christ and the Gospel. Confused and lost in his iniquity, despairing of all hope, the guilty one sees only the wrath, the justice of God. Then the Holy Spirit descends into the despair of the unregenerate, which He himself has wrought, that He may contend in the battle between God and Satan. He construes the Law spiritually, that is, He presents the wrath of God as His righteousness. This righteousness pronounces eternal damnation upon the sinner, to be sure, but it also conducts to grace and salvation in Christ. For there can be no mercy without judgment, no succor without demand for it, created by the Holy Ghost in him wholly unworthy of such mercy and succor. Mediated by the Holy Spirit, the humble and glorified Christ is offered as a gift to the trespasser. And the very Holy Spirit, who in the Law leads into inner conflict, is one and the same with the Holy Spirit, who rescues from the conflict; even as Jesus Christ, who cried out on the cross is one and the same Lord with Him, who now sits on the throne of glory.

The work of the Holy Spirit parallels the Passion of Christ in the struggle between Law and Gospel in the lost sinner. In this

struggle the Holy Spirit intercedes with unutterable groanings directed to Christ, and presents the redeeming reality of the risen Christ in grace, faith, and love. Through tribulation and affliction, through suffering as in Gethsemane, through the death of the wilful self to the resurrection to a new life created by the Holy Spirit, the conformity to Christ runs its course in the unregenerate. And this to the end that in union with the Saviour the believer may by faith enter into His realm of eternal priesthood and kingship. The wrath of God is then turned into the gift of grace and faith, forgiveness of sin, and the presence of Christ Himself. The work of the Holy Spirit is completed in the miracle of transformation and sanctification, in the removal of the sinner from the tyranny of the Law to the kingdom of the Gospel, of the Holy Spirit, to freedom and to life.

The third Person of the Trinity manifests His otherness in the work of sanctification: He condemns whom He sets free, He puts to death whom He raises up, He sends into the torment of hell whom He saves eternally. In weakness He makes strong. By His creative omnipotence He endows with new life while He demolishes the old; He, the almighty God, descends to the sinner that He may bestow His Holiness. This until on the Last Day His child is made a wholly new creature. Patently, then, Luther's testimony concerning the Holy Spirit is identical with the limitless expectation of God as proclaimed in the Bible, the expectation of the Triune God, a living, creative reality.

Luther differentiated sharply between a sanctified life and empirical piety. Outside the sphere of the Holy Spirit all piety is simply the activity of man himself, is of the flesh and bound to legalism. In Luther's analysis outward obedience to the "thou shalt" of the Law is but a proud attempt to self-justification before God. Lacking the Holy Spirit, the Law is understood empirically, devoid of its inherent Holiness and Justice. And the conscience is compelled to rely upon its own presumed righteousness and good works. Luther rejected such works as of no avail, even though they might appear to be pious. Indeed, such piety may be called the fruit of the spirit, but it is of the human spirit. Luther was certain that every form of spirit and spirituality not proceeding from the Person of the Holy Spirit in God Himself

must in the end confess to a piety promoted to accord with the letter of the Law. In itself an outward life of piety is no proof of sanctification nor can it aspire to the category of righteousness before God. The alien righteousness of Christ alone justifies before God. In so far only as the living and risen Christ Himself lives our life vicariously in us can it be called sanctified and spiritual. The Holy Spirit creates this new life in faith, and He dwells within, the Sustainer in faith. Outside the Holy Spirit, outside Christ there is, as Luther understands it, no righteous, no sanctified life in the sense of the Gospel.

For Luther sanctification begins with baptism. Its destination is the resurrection. On the Last Day—the Day of Judgment—Christ will return and the believers will arise “with glorified bodies to everlasting life.” The progress of sanctification moves in continual returning to Christ in penitence. In every moment of life, to the very last, man is dependent upon the mercy of God. God gives, does all the work, maintains and sustains; man receives in faith.

In Luther's exposition, reliance upon reason, upon sense-experience in our striving to please God can not but lead to error. In similar vein the Lord God in Goethe's *Faust* asserts explicitly: “*es irrt der Mensch so lang er strebt*,” man errs throughout his striving. Confident of his own efforts he depends upon his proud and “concupiscent” nature, his *caro*, to use the medieval term employed also by Luther. Since human reason and the senses are by nature outside the sphere of the Holy Spirit, Luther was convinced that in the “flesh” true knowledge of God is impossible. The flesh does not know why it should hate its natural self or how it should condemn it; it is not even aware of its own self-exaltation or of its lack of a due sense of dependence upon Almighty God. Yet only in the humility of self-condemnation and in the death of the prideful self can the Holy Spirit be present and God be glorified.

Luther's view of God was not that of Scholasticism. Whereas the Middle Ages sought to probe the essence of God, Luther desired to know Him in His revelation, in the “*Deus incarnatus*,” in Christ Jesus revealed in the flesh. For in His Son God made known His will toward men. In the *caritas*-idealism of the

Middle Ages, on the other hand, that is, in the thought of man's inborn love of God, in the concept of man's natural, idealistic struggle and longing for goodness, as presented in Augustinian speculation, man is already on the way toward God, and the Holy Ghost is but the transcendent source of the inner drive; only from afar off does He assist toward the attainment of the goal.

Furthermore, in this view infused grace advances and lightens any arduousness involved in the progress toward participation in the love and wisdom of God. That is to say, in the *caritas*-idealism the Holy Spirit is neither present, nor is He the Creator in the process of Sanctification, as in Luther's exegesis. Luther is of the unalterable opinion that the quenchless "*concupiscentia*" and self-seeking in man taints and vitiates all ideal striving, all love of good, and makes it part of the flesh. Man as such is dead in sin. Luther could not subscribe to the metaphysical idealistic concept that in the act of sanctification and in the infusion of grace the noble part already in man is aided in its inherent perfectibility. For he firmly believed that the love of God poured out by the Holy Spirit into man's heart is a miracle wrought wholly by the Triune God Himself.

It was Luther's biblical conception of the Holy Spirit that prevented the whole range of his thinking about Christ, grace, about the Word, justification, faith, and love from being simply a great ideology under the Law. By emphasis upon the real presence of the Holy Spirit indwelling in the believer he distinguished between an idea of Christ and Christ Himself, life-giving in His real presence, between Law and Gospel, letter and spirit, between ethics and Christian love, between the scholastic "*sacrificium*" and the Evangelical sacrament.

The work of the Holy Spirit, creative and Creator, is the consummation of the one, eternal, total act of God, a continuous love toward men expressed in the Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification. Redemption and Sanctification complete the work of Creation. By his fall man lost direct access to His Creator and was and is sentenced to eternal damnation and delivered over to the despotism of sin, Satan, and death. Into the midst of the sinner's death and ragings of hell the Holy Spirit descends and makes clear the

meaning of the Father's Creation and the Son's Redemption. By His work of Salvation the Son assumed mastery over all enemies and restored the blessings of the Creation. But for the work of the Holy Spirit this victory would lie an untouched treasure. He presents it to the sinner and by a miracle wrought within makes it a living, sanctifying reality. In such manner is the work of Creation, restored in the Redemption, brought to completion in the work of the Holy Spirit. The Triune God thus, in Luther's theology, reaches down to man—for man is incapable of any upward endeavor toward God. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God that this unbroken act of the Holy Trinity be made known.

Until His return on the Day of Judgment, Christ, by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, rules in the realm of faith and grace. Upon the Last Day He will surrender His dominion to the Father, who will then be "all in all." In the dominion of the Father, "the realm of glory," the Father Himself, as He is, will rule, no longer by the communion of the Holy Spirit and the grace of Jesus Christ. But we, purified in faith, our salvation completed, shall see Him face to face, and know the meaning of the love of God, creative in the Triune God. For the Triune God revealed Himself in order that He be glorified here and in eternity. And thus Luther's early cry of despair in the monastery for a merciful God in the end found answer in Him beside whom "there is no other God." The meaning of *the Triune God* was now understood as the fulfillment of the First Commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," and therewith the fulfillment of all law. It meant that "His name is hallowed," for beside Him there is no other name.

Luther's theology is God-centered, in no wise man-centered. However profound and inexplicable to Luther may have been the fact of forgiveness of sin and of the sanctification of total man, he was convinced that the supreme meaning and chief purpose of Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification is the glorification of God. It is the knowledge and the faith that He, in whom the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one, is the only true God. It was to Him that the angels sang: "Glory be to God in the highest!" And to Him Christ directs our adoration: "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever!"

THE WILL — SOURCE OF GOOD AND EVIL

What faculty in man apprizes him of the Judge, whose superior power prostrates him? what informs him of the Father of Goodness and Love, in whose presence he exults? Luther asked the question and found the answer in the analysis of good and evil, more particularly in the source of these, the will. Luther's development grew out of a temperament sensitive, incisive, intense, fervid, profoundly religious. It was therefore urgent that he find an unequivocal answer to the questions: Whence comes evil, how is the good possible, how can one recognize and pass judgment on them? To find the answer, he probed the source of good and evil, of moral and ethical conduct, and penetrated to the deeper, religious nature of the will. For the word moral, applying to the rightness and oughtness of man's conduct, to the distinction of right and wrong in it, and the science or doctrine of ethics as centered on sources, principles, and ideals of conduct, are experiences within the realm of pure reason and do not involve all of man. Luther's problem had to do with man in his totality.

It must be noted that Luther conceived of the unconditionedness and implacability of the immutable ethic of divine demand no more sternly than did the great saints of the Middle Ages. But the whole problem of the will was with him a far more interior and spiritual experience. His was the realization, first, that man can not improve the goodness of his will through outer performance, and second, that man does not act outside of volition; that he is not controlled mechanically in a dependence upon some higher principle or cause and is thus rendered will-less, but that the very core of man is a living will, and whatever he does, is determined in the unity of this will. In this will man's relation to God and man, the goodness of his deeds, and the truth of his knowledge of God are decided.

The will is impelled by feeling. It is inseparable from the stream of impulses flowing in man incessantly. It is a continuous energy, the concentration of man's whole temper, disposition, and capacity of feeling. It initiates action without reflection. This center of human striving and acting, this never-ending stir and drive within is not arbitrary, hence not free, for it proceeds from God who is

a force in essence immovable, and yet is motion and propulsion itself, creative omnipotence, divine activity behind all. God is active love, Christ is the substance and dispenser of this love in the Holy Spirit, and the content of ethical spontaneity is God's love in divine activity. In the final analysis, all will to the Good can emanate from God only, for He is the substance of the Good, He is spontaneity, He is the goal of all spontaneous goodwill. The will is good, holy, free "when it submits to divine will and is made of one form with it, so that man is wholly without concern, free, will-less, and knows nothing more than to await God's will."¹⁴² When the will is turned to God, man experiences the active love of God within, he feels himself dependent upon God, he is aware of being continually created and quickened by Him. Man's goodness is thus determined by the disposition of his will toward this inworking, holy activity.

But that is not all. The fateful fact is, that in the uttermost foundation of this will, which decides his very existence, man is sensible of a bent, which resists divine love and radically opposes God. It is the presumption of the "creature," an insult to God's majesty. It is sin itself, which is in all truth man's abandonment of God and his being forsaken of God. In this state he is manifestly not ruled by divine love. The restlessly active will is rather seeking goals other than God, and the isolated will, asserting itself against God's sublimity and omnipotence, actually falls away from His will. And such a fall of man has taken place, such a rent in the unity of the divine world process has occurred, and man can will himself instead of willing God. This is the essence of evil.

Evil in Luther's words is selfishness, egoism, "*concupiscentia*." The *Small Catechism* defines it as "every departure from the rule of the divine Law." Sin was brought into the world by "the devil, who first departed from God, and by man, who of his own free will suffered himself to be misled by Satan into sin." "Original sin," inherited from Adam, is "the total depravity of our whole human nature, which is now deprived of its concreated righteousness, inclined toward all that is evil, and subject to damnation." "Actual sin" is committed in "every transgression of the divine Law in desires, thoughts, words, and deeds."¹⁴³

Adam's fall proved the weakness of man's will when left to

itself. He was disobedient to God in that as a person he consented to the lure of evil. Original sin is the sin of Adam, and therefore the sin of all, since Adam is the type of mankind. Evil can only beget evil, it is propagated in the children of Adam, and thus is sin inherited. That is, man inherits the false direction of his desires, self-love, rejection of the good, inclination to iniquity. Beside it there is no room for love of God. The fact of sin is verified in the Law of God and in His promises of redemption. Sin is a fundamental concept in the Old Testament, and its destructive consequences are depicted in the lives of the patriarchs. The prophets passionately declaim against it, and the psalmists, as "Moses in the ninety-first psalm" and "David in the fifty-first," seek refuge in God before its onslaughts.

Luther disagreed with the Scholasticists as to the meaning of original sin. In their view loss of righteousness did not involve radical estrangement from God and complete surrender to evil, but entailed simply deprivation of a "higher supplement" to man's natural, godlike, human endowment. An uncorrupted integrity remained intact in the sinner, and therewith the possibility of an own good will and action, and even a degree of merit. They granted "*concupiscentia*" inclusion in the glossary of man's sinfulness, but understood it to be carnal desire, no longer a sin after baptism. Luther was certain that the whole of man is a servant to original sin, that the whole of man is under the curse and subject to damnation, and therefore in need of redemption.

To be sure, Luther did not dispute that the natural moral law is still active despite original sin. The inclination to self-preservation, a conception of honor, ambition, heroic deeds, as the ancients knew them, still persist as a driving force. But man is not truly good in this state, for the sinner outside of God seeks his own.

Luther's theology is built on the fact of sin. Its nucleus is neither the creature, as in Mysticism, nor human nature, as in Humanism. It proceeds from the knowledge that it is man's destiny to live unto God and unto his fellow men, that in fact the fulfillment of this destiny is always obstructed by the will concentrated on self. Sin is not a static quality, it is a "restless evil," active day and night, even in our dreams; even in sleep seduction to disobedience and avarice vaunts its triumph. It is not the lack of a

particular kind of righteousness or rightness of mind, but it is an active perverseness born with us and ingrained in us. In his sinfulness man refuses submission to and acquiescence in the will of God, he disobeys His commandments, he takes pride in his own strength and worthiness, and puts his trust in the treasures of this earth. Sin opposes God, rebels against His order and purposes, scoffs at His Creation, and flouts His Majesty. Sin denies God's mercy, refuses to glorify Him, to affirm His Being, to turn to Him as the "sum of all prayers and devotion." Unbelief is the chiefest sin; in its deepest root it is alienation from God, a not-knowing Christ. Luther further calls sin an "incomprehensible infinitum." Incomprehensible because he who was created in the image of God, made to love Him, now blasphemes Him. And the consequences are incalculable, infinite.

The destructive power of sin is concentrated in "original sin." All human life stands under its coercion. It strips man completely and radically of any ability to obey God's command either in letter or in spirit. It makes destitute of all integrity, probity, purity. It is the total despoilment and depletion of any spiritual energy and faculty within either the inner or the outer man. It is the outright rejection of the good, and the espousal of evil. It is doubt, despair, contempt, hatred, ignorance of God, ingratitude towards Him.

And all sin is punishment meted out in the form of a hopeless, stern compulsion to continue its bond-slave throughout life. It inflicts punishment in that the wages of sin is death, eternal death. And eternal death is eternal separation from God, from all good. Whereas heaven, life, salvation are there where the will is at one with the will of God, sin, hell, wretchedness, and despair are there where the will attempts to escape God's will.

Punishment for sin is not always "the rod of His wrath." Sometimes God sends it as a means of chastening, concealing His mercy and love in His eagerness to save man. For His goal is life, not death. And though He is the Judge, whose wrath strikes with terror, He is also the "jealous" Father. The wrath belongs to the Judge, the jealousy to the Father. He is a jealous, that is, a zealous God, as Luther translated it, zealous in His unending love and mercy. He visits iniquity "unto the third and fourth generation of

them that hate me," but He shows mercy "unto thousands of them that love me."

God, releasing man to Satan's rule, wishes to arouse to the consciousness of guilt and helplessness, to suffering because of sinfulness, to penitence, and to grace. Whenever He withdraws His hand from His creatures, and they become an offense one to the other, this "actual sin" is a force independent and outside the immediate realm and aid of God. For evil exists outside God even though it is bound to Him through His creature, man, who belongs to Him, but who succumbs to evil when forsaken of Him.

Sin belongs to the spiritual realm. It is not manifest, it is not committed to demonstration, nor to the ordinary processes of observation and thought. This sinister power operates so covertly and insidiously, so assiduously that natural man does not perceive it. Secretly, subconsciously sin wills the self, opposes the will of God and rejects man's destiny to love God and man. The will to evil is far deeper than consciousness. It lies in strata accessible to spiritual recognition and faith alone. Man knows and believes himself a sinner only, when by the grace of God and the help of the Holy Spirit he "sees with the eyes of God." By virtue of this knowledge and belief he realizes that the eternally decreed, inexorable necessity of his course toward God and man has been completely submerged and swept away in the arbitrariness of his self-centered will. He is aware that guilt lies in the foundation of life, hidden behind and in all human life, and he recognizes it as a condition from which there is no escape.

Religion is for Luther a ready, living glorification of God won through His grace. This is possible only where sin is recognized and acknowledged as a fact, as man's permanent plight. The sinner must be conscious of this egotistical concupiscence generating "actual" deeds of sin; he must realize that his existence is built on opposition to the will of God, that he can not free himself from it because he can not turn away from self-seeking. In this knowledge he must hate, despise, condemn the self. And Luther is convinced that no one who has not first been established in the good can recognize evil or admit it to himself. And thus he who cries out, "I am a sinner," fathoms life more correctly and penetrates more deeply than he who declares, "I am a human being."

No human being has his existence outside the antithesis and contradiction which sin is in its opposition to the good. Life is not a sum of single deeds, it is a whole, taking its direction at the behest of sin. This direction toward evil is not visible, nor tangible, nor can it be proved rationally, yet it is, and upon it rests the total depravity of man.

Since man assumes that all of life is lived in the realm of the conscious, that he is master of his will, he considers himself free. Luther's interpretation makes clear that only in God is man free. The presumed freedom man boasts is really bound to Satan. Indeed, the problem of the will is not solved by man. Will as such is that deepest vital force which secures in itself the secret and mystery of life. "To be sure, God has given you a free will; why then would you make it your own will and not permit it to remain free? If you do with it as you will, it is not free, but your own. God however has given neither to you nor to anyone else an own will; for the own will comes from the devil and from Adam, which they received from God . . . A free will is that, which seeks not its own, but looks to God's will alone; thereby it remains free, and neither adheres nor clings to anything else."¹⁴⁴

Committed to itself, the will ventures away from communion with God and forfeits its freedom. It seeks and searches self as the ultimate, and in the end finds nothing more than the ego, man. This phenomenon of evil in the form of egoism, so strong in the temporal world, seeking its own kingdom and glory, must of necessity set itself against the realm of God's love; for selfishness chains man to himself, looses and delivers him to egoism.

Paradoxically enough, however, this ever-impelling will of man is the will of the Almighty God, whose activity is not arrested by evil; as a matter of fact, Satan too is subject to the "all-effectuating" God. The power of God is behind evil, Satan is restlessly driven by it, and can not remain idle. Satan's violence is not commanded him of God; but God does not hinder him, lets him bluster, "but not any longer nor any farther than is His will; he may not, nor can he overstep the bounds set him."¹⁴⁵ Evil does not therewith become God's work.

Luther suggests that one ought not think of Satan, "as if he were far away and in hell . . . for he dwells in hardened hearts,

besets and incites [the heart] according to his will and pleasure,"¹⁴⁶ urges, effects whatever he desires; even as the Holy Spirit is active in the believer and compels him to all good things. "However that which God effects in the heart and the Holy Spirit performs in man, he [Satan] can neither know nor see."¹⁴⁷ The wickedness abroad in the world teaches us what the devil and his like are, so that we may pray the more diligently. The devil's wilfulness and malevolence are the means whereby God "will effect much good in the end, as St. Augustine says: God is so good that He would permit no evil to occur, if He did not intend to draw something better out of it. . . . Not that evil pleases Him . . . but that He show forth His goodness the more richly . . . unto His praise and glory . . . that He teach us to pray earnestly. Earnest prayer, however, is an almighty, powerful and triumphant thing."¹⁴⁸

To be sure, the power of Satan is not autonomous nor absolute. If the devil had complete power to rage and caper as he might like, if God did not hinder him, "you would not live an hour."¹⁴⁹ God uses the devil's malice in such a way that good proceeds from it. "God is such a Master, that He skillfully brings about, that whatever would hinder and harm us, must further and advance us; whatever would bring death, must serve to give life; whatever would condemn and cause us to fall, must help fortify our faith and hope, so that our prayer is strengthened and answered the more abundantly."¹⁵⁰ For "God uses all tribulation and suffering, not to harm the Christians [as the devil and the world judge], but for their benefit. He cleanses them thereby and prunes them, that they bear much fruit."¹⁵¹ God purposes that heaven be established within the heart, that the human will surrender joyously to His will. For lacking this surrender, the heart finds itself in hell.

Luther was forced to ask himself the inevitable question: If God wills, effects, and does all things, is man's will when directed away from Him, actually evil? Does not God, eternal Goodness and Love, will it? Here Luther stood face to face with one of the unresolved contradictions in theology. He answered that God is above all law, as we understand it, and that only when His will surpasses all human understanding is the will of God His will. But the human mind still asks: Why does He not will an end to evil,

why does He permit His sun to shine upon the just and the unjust, why does He not withhold His life-giving power from the wicked? Or, why does He not convert all evil to good? Luther reflected that the wish implied in such probing of the mysterious God requested that, because of the problem of evil, God be God no longer. God is the God of life. His unfathomable divine Majesty alone knows the answer. It is a paradox that His omnipotence uses even the wicked as instruments of His will, that is, to His glory and for the salvation of His children. And this, even though only the imperfect can be wrought by means of the imperfect instruments men are.

To be sure, questions persisted: Do not these imperfect instruments freely set evil afoot? Why did God permit Adam's fall? In the final analysis, did not God cause Adam to fall? If God permitted it, He brought it about. Even as God's will ordained that the direction toward Him is good, and the direction toward man's own will and happiness is evil, so He willed that Adam seek his own and not the will of God. St. Paul refers the problem of evil to the hiddenness of His supreme righteousness and justice. St. Augustine and Luther agreed with him. Origen, quite at variance with St. Paul, was attracted by the thought of eternal return: Return, ye children of men! In a new world and other new worlds to come, the sinner may gradually be made acceptable in His sight. For the Good Shepherd will not forsake His sheep.

In Luther's view evil as such belongs to the mysteries of the mysterious God. In truth, often the fetters of egoism are broken by disaster and catastrophic suffering. It is the mysterious way of God that he conveys the beatitude of salvation by means of suffering, thus concealing light and joy under the appearance of their opposite. Transcendentally evil is its own punishment as good is its own reward. God posits the enigma of being never-ceasing will, which is the good, in conflict with the evil, which is opposed to the good; and yet He is the "Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," and "by Him were all things made."

Luther's interest in the phenomenon of the will did not proceed from abstract reflection, but from dynamic, intuitive feeling. He emphasized that one understands not in the coolness of perception, but in the "affect," in the state and condition wrought in

agitated, passionate emotion. Hence, the power of the "affect" was his nearest concern: the spontaneity, involuntariness, indestructibility of feeling, and the conditionedness of every impulse of the will by the press of feeling. The will can not stand still.

Luther was the first to perceive that the will carries its own law within itself, that man can give no objective reason for his volition, his fears, desires, love, hate, which impel him and burst forth in ever-changing form. He established the primacy of the will, which signifies that the will is a phenomenon of first importance, and it must be recognized in the majesty of its own lawfulness, that is, in its being a law unto itself. It may be modified by moral and intellectual efforts, but these can not be substituted for it. This means that objective thought alone can not encompass religious experiences and ideas: for religious intuition shatters the jurisdiction of intellectualism. Therefore, evil is not synonymous with the subrational forces of the self which the human mind can gradually master as the Greeks believed. It is "concupiscence," and that again, as Luther saw it, is not carnal lust, but the evil of all evils: self-centeredness.

Freedom of the Will

DE SERVO ARBITRIO

In the critical years of Protestantism Luther was called upon to expound and interpret his position in regard to the freedom of the will. A barrage of pamphlets supporting Scholasticism, Romanism, Humanism sought to stem the tide of anti-Romanist polemics. The radical intensity of the zealots had to be directed to the source of authority. The boundaries in the sphere of dogma had to be determined over against Zwingli's humanistic-political movement of reform. Not long before his death Luther stated that nothing he had written was more truly his own than the book *De Servo Arbitrio*, On the Will not Free, or Concerning the Bondage of the Human Will, 1525, in which he set forth his conception of the problem of the will.

The paradox inborn in man is reflected in various phenomena of the will: in the incontrovertible consciousness that man is free and responsible; that he, despite all, obeys the tug of inmost voli-

tion; and yet, by implication, he can not of himself alter his volition toward either good or evil. The necessity of this servitude to the will, the being bound to it, arises from the fact that the will is the core of man, which he does not create, nor can he; it derives from God; yet in and out of this central essence he lives. Therefore he feels he is free, dependent only upon himself. Thus, according to Luther, "freedom" and "necessity" inhere in the will, and the consciousness of "freedom" and of dependence upon God issues from the same source. Here is the foundation of the concept of good and evil, being "bound" to God, being "free" of God, surrendered to the good, or to the self. Surrender to the self, it need hardly be said, can by no means constitute "freedom," but is selfish self-seeking. Good and evil, these are the alternatives which preclude all compromise.

This conviction prompted Luther to inveigh against the "dialectic invention" that there is in man a "free" or neutral "middle,"¹⁵² which in itself is neither good nor evil. It was this "middle" which Erasmus and the early Church Father Origen regarded as a haven outside the stream of volition, and, therefore, as the point of entry for the divine work of redemption. Luther held that salvation can have significance only in respect to a perversity of human nature, else there is no need of it; that salvation demands a complete regeneration, a being created anew in all parts, parallel to the first creation.

Luther impugned also the possibility of an indifference of the will. Since it is a continuous, active, effectuating power, it can not be thought of without this effectiveness. It is impossible to will without effecting something by this willing, even though the effectuation of any purpose or plan may not be wholly accomplished. Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus had maintained that the will could will something without effecting anything in the direction of the willed thing. Luther was certain that where there is a will, it must be active, something must be and is effected, good or evil results, man is free or bound.

The impulsive drive that is the will, ruled by unconditioned contrasts, is free only when it is at one with God. Even relative freedom of thought does not imply freedom of the will, as the rationalists asserted. Scholasticism posited the essence and freedom

of the will on pure thinking. Thomas Aquinas came to his conception of freedom of the will by the deductive method. In careful dialectic he arrived at the conclusion that a man wants or wills a thing, because, after an objective examination, his unbiased reason holds it to be good and estimable. Luther insisted, however, that strong drives and compulsions in man do not stay for a dispassionate scrutiny of the object of these feelings, but turn impulsively to the thing desired, initiate action without deliberation and only subsequently create its value and worth. He recognized that in the final analysis man's deeds are founded more deeply than on intentions or values disclosed by reflective thinking, as accepted by Thomas and Scholasticism. True will, he felt, is spontaneous emotion, irresistibly and unalterably powerful, and its nature and behavior can not be comprehended by pure thinking. It is an original drive which may be modified by thinking, but mental activity can not be substituted for it. Thinking by no means annuls or arrests volition, for will is to such a degree man himself, that he can not cause it to cease. There is no "*ratio absoluta*," said Luther, thinking depends upon volition.

Erasmus, on the other hand had argued that, "under free will we understand the ability of the human will . . . to turn to or to reject that which leads to eternal salvation."¹⁵³ The goal is attained, if, in his weakness, man's effort is aided by the Holy Spirit. Erasmus had written in his diatribe against Luther, *De Libero Arbitrio*, A Disquisition upon Free Will, 1524, "man can perform a good though imperfect deed . . . in which there will be some merit, which however he must fully ascribe to God."¹⁵⁴ Thus the believer, calling upon his own strength to come to obedience to Him, gains merit in the eyes of God through this act. This means that the individual, with the support of divine grace, may, by his own effort and voluntarily, earn salvation; that a certain merit accrues to him. That this "good work" avails.

Luther disagreed with this view. "By his own strength man has a free will to perform or to omit outward works . . . he can perform worldly piety and good works by his own strength, given him and maintained by God. St. Paul calls this righteousness of the flesh (Gal. 2: 16) . . . [thus] he does indeed have a choice and freedom to flee evil and to turn to the good . . . by our own

strength we can not change the heart, but we can prevent outward transgression . . . God demands such righteousness from everyone . . . If man were not protected and ruled by God, Satan would incite him to sin and prevent that he be devout even outwardly . . . On the other hand, man can not by his own strength cleanse his heart or bring about God's grace; as, for instance, true penitence, true and not feigned fear of God, true patience, ardent prayer, etc., etc. St. Paul says Rom. 8: 7; I Cor. 2: 14: 'Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God'; he does not see God's wrath, therefore he does not really fear it; nor does he behold the goodness of God, therefore he neither rightly trusts Him nor believes in Him."¹⁵⁵ According to Erasmus man's free will is proved by the fact that the early Christians performed miracles. Over against this Luther asserted that the miracles were acts of faith in Christ Jesus, performed by this faith, and not by human free will.

Luther founded the unity of faith and works on the personal, prerational conditionedness of the will. Man's doing flows unintentionally and "without meritoriousness and worthiness" out of his innermost faculty of willing. Through the disjunction in his will he became estranged from God, and in vain does he seek security in "good works," which are not identical with good will, and therefore not valid. The transformation of the will through grace alone can save. Grace is the activity of God within us, it is the conversion of the self-centered will into a "good will," a God-centered will; it is God's doing, God's indwelling in man.

God alone transforms the evil in us to good. "It is God who works in us, we suffer and let Him act; . . . thus our will is free to suffer, but not to act either passively or actively . . . for we can not do the good in divine things."¹⁵⁶ "Whoever defends man's free will in spiritual things [and maintains], that in these he is able and can co-operate, even in the smallest way, denies Christ."¹⁵⁷ It is clear that "if there were in us a free will against or over the devil, death, and sin, then there were no need that Christ died for us; whoever can escape sin without Christ, he can no doubt also escape death, for death is the wages of sin. Thus far, however, none has been found who proved his free will over and against death . . . No one can dissuade me from this, that Christ saved us from devil, death, and sin."¹⁵⁸

De Servo Arbitrio sprang from Luther's strong faith in the "hidden God," hidden spiritually in the crucified Christ. If the work of man could have any significance beside the alone-effectiveness of God, then the work of Christ is superfluous. Luther maintained this position throughout. Redemption in Christ is the mysterious will of God toward man's salvation, and faith in Christ as man's Saviour makes man's free will impossible in matters of salvation. Our only assurance is given us in Christ. Uncertainty, doubt, vacillation are the believer's inevitable companions wherever the theory of free will, of merit in works is accepted, for who can know whether his work pleases God, whether it is sufficient? "When however my salvation depends upon the will of God, upon His faithfulness and might, then I can be secure: not because of my merit, but in virtue of the power of God's grace and mercy, which alone can forgive my faults and weaknesses."¹⁵⁹

To be sure, Luther recognized "free will" in temporal affairs, in the ordinary aspect of outer life. Whatever man does, and whatever his choice in natural freedom, however, he still is subject to divine omnipotence, which co-operates with human freedom. "It is certainly true and I grant that man's natural powers are still somewhat uncorrupted. But what are such natural powers? . . . these, that though he be . . . the devil's own, he still has a will, reason, he is free and has power to rule in the home and in the world: [he is free to] direct ships and to do other like things, subjected to man by God . . . these belong to the temporal and physical realm in the world. But if they are to be applied in the spiritual realm, where we have to do with God, and for God and conscience, then straightway I say no thereto, for [in the spiritual realm] there is nothing pure or good in us; but what we are and have is drowned in sin . . . Whatever is in our will is evil and whatever is in our intellect is pure error and blindness. Therefore man performs nothing but pure darkness, error, malice, wrong, ill will and folly; how could he do the good and love God?" Reason is blind, knows and understands nothing in godly things. He continues: "I am speaking of a free will toward God and concerning the soul. Why should I dispute at length about a free will which rules over cows, horses, money, and goods? I know well enough that God gave man dominion over cattle and the earth Gen. 1: 28. But that does not belong here . . . to be captive to the

devil is verily no freedom."¹⁶⁰ We are all like the man possessed of the devil whom Christ freed and made whole. He is the symbol of the children of Adam, possessed of the devil in original sin.

If the kingdom of God is to dwell in us, Satan must be cast out. "But devils do not cast our devils, much less are they cast out by man or through the power of man, but alone through the Spirit and power of God . . . So the conclusion towers mightily, that as long as the Holy Spirit does not come into us, we are not only incapable toward the good, but we are of necessity in the realm of Satan."¹⁶¹ "And no one can overcome the devil except God alone."¹⁶² "The will of man works and does nothing at all toward his conversion and justification . . . after the Holy Spirit has worked in the will of the recalcitrant one, He effects and brings about that the will agrees with Him . . . we all resist God, but the Holy Spirit draws us [o Him] . . . He stirs the heart inwardly and moves whither He will, effectuates and makes the Word strong and active in the heart."¹⁶³ Manifestly, man can not bring about his own salvation.

Therefore it behooves him to recognize his own limitations in humility, and in thankfulness to praise and serve his Lord and God. "It becomes us to inquire as to what free will can do and what its relation to the grace of God is . . . If I do not know what, in what respect, and how much I am able to do toward God, it will also be unknown to me, what, in what respect, and how much God can do in me and does do, since He works all things in all. If I do not know His works and might . . . then I can not praise Him, nor thank Him, nor serve Him, for I do not know how much I am to ascribe to myself and how much to God."¹⁶⁴ As long as the Christian is convinced he can do even the least thing toward his soul's salvation, he trusts in himself, he does not wholly despair of himself and therefore knows no humility before God.

Only in our humility do we recognize the majesty of God and our "darkness" before Him. In order that His overwhelming power, His infinite, eternal, terrifying tremendousness may not totally destroy mankind, God reserved to Himself His Godhead in the Absolute, and reveals Himself in part, by means communicable to human limitations. Thus there remain questions and speculations concerning which God offers no particular revela-

tion. Among these are those that have to do with the doctrine of predestination. How is it, that though He, the eternal and just God, decreed salvation for all, some are saved, some lost? Why are some receptive to faith, others obdurate? Can the chosen one commit sin and lose his election? Is man not the doer of his deeds, his will free to choose?

Such were the questions Luther encountered in hours of tribulation, when Satan was bent on leading to despondency or to a mood of dangerous security, thoughtless of sin. Luther confessed that the thought that God freely forsakes the sinner, hardens him, condemns him, had again and again driven him to the point of despair, until he realized how salutary was this despair and how near to grace. In such moments his secure defense and refuge was the one truth: God does not desire the destruction of wretched man, for He is the God of mercy. And no brooding, no probing can decipher the decree: "many are called, few are chosen," and humanly reconcile it with His righteousness revealed in His love.

However, it was clear to Luther, that fundamentally the concept of predestination must be related to the prescience of God, to His omnipotence and His divine immutability. God's omnipotence is His absolute activity "which animates all in all." Since His will and prescience are immutable, everything willed by Him must of necessity come to pass. Furthermore, His plan, its execution, and its completion are one act. His plan or His will, which is His might, activity, love, all in one, is effective, is irresistible in all things. He can not change. If knowledge and occurrence are not immutably one in God, then His threats and promises are futile and not to be believed.

While the creature, apparently endowed with a free will, is changeable in fact, subject to many factors impinging upon him, God alone is unchangeable. He, the omniscient and almighty God, knows all thoughts, desires, and works of His creatures, and they are done according to His will. His immutability is not affected or changed by merit or non-merit, His decree is established from all beginning. And it is His will and His decree from eternity that all men be saved. Faith, building upon the Invisible, upon that which seems Impossible, that is, upon His power, truth, and love, must, in respect to predestination, build also upon His immutabil-

ity, upon the unwavering conviction that God does not and can not change or alter His decrees.

Why God deserts us and casts us out, that belongs to the mysteries of the just and wholly "other" God, whose righteousness is divine and whose justice none can comprehend. He has told us where we may find Him, but His being in actuality transcends His Word and revelation. Whatever is now incomprehensible will be revealed in a future glory and perfection. Now it is darkness to the light of reason, to the light of grace, to the light of the Gospel.¹⁶⁵

With regard to that "which passeth understanding" Luther calls to mind the admonishing words of Christ: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." And he advised that our thoughts be fastened not upon the darkness in which we dwell, but upon His words of promise and grace. It is sufficient to know that whoever perseveres in penitence and in faith is surely chosen. In the day of eternal joy we shall understand. Until then we must in all simplicity trust God more than our own thoughts: be still, stay and silence reason, and rest surrendered to His hand. For our reasoning power has to do with whatever is beneath us, around us, and not with that which is above us.¹⁶⁶ Luther's response to the probing of the Inscrutable and Unfathomable was similarly formulated by the poet Goethe: we must bring serene reverence to that which is above and beyond our comprehension.

And so likewise must man's surmised "free will" be surrendered to a greater will, not fully understood. For Luther argued, that he alone, who does not doubt that all things are encompassed in the will of God, completely despairs of self and awaits God's grace and work in him.¹⁶⁷ "Once God is active in us, then is our will gently breathed upon by the Spirit of God and so transformed that it wills and acts in sheer joy and inclination, voluntarily . . . and continues willing that which is good in eagerness and devotion . . . then are we servants of the Holy Spirit and His captives . . . that is the kingly freedom, that we freely desire and do what He wishes . . . the free will without God's grace is not free but captive to evil."¹⁶⁸ He continues that it is right to say that the strength of the free will is man's aptitude to appropriation by the Holy Spirit and to endowment with the grace of God, a readiness

and quality of disposition towards His indwelling. But certainly outside of grace there is no free will.

"Hence follows that free will is an entirely divine word, which can apply to no one except God's divine majesty, for He can and does do all things He pleases in heaven and on earth, Ps. 116: 3."¹⁶⁹ To attribute such power to man would be synonymous with investing him with the godhead, grave blasphemy indeed! The name given to whatever ability we may ascribe to man ought not so wretchedly deceive people into thinking that they can of themselves do all things, and that they are free from all dependence and submission. "Free will" is an extraordinary, glorious, and significant word; it transmits the mystery of God's majesty, wholly incomprehensible to man. And it does not become us to search out His godly judgments, nor can we; but rather ought we to revere them. He is God, and for His will there is neither cause nor reason. Were there for Him any rule or measure, any cause or reason, then could His will no longer be the will of God, then must another Creator be enthroned over Him.

The very omniscience, the very omnipotence of God contradicts man's free will. "I call the omnipotence of God . . . that power, which is active, through which He mightily effects all things in all."¹⁷⁰ Reason is incensed because it can not encompass Him, and demands that He submit to human law or cease being God. And, Luther asks, of what avail is the mystery of His majesty if His doing and willing bears no trace of justice? We refuse to accept "that He is good and just if in His exaltation His speech and performance are contrary to Justinian's Code or to the fifth book of Aristotle's *Ethics*."¹⁷¹ The will of God stands beyond that which we call good and evil, beyond all human conceiving.

Can the effort of man's free will attain to salvation? He is not even able in authority over creature or creation, how should he be competent to attire himself in the glory that is the Creator's? What madness is ours? Man strives for good or evil, but he errs in both directions and thus shows himself devoid of freedom. But does he not aspire in prayer? Is not that free will? Whoever prays, prays in the Spirit, and it is not a question here of the freedom and ability of the Holy Spirit. It is a question of natural man's free

will, outside God's indwelling Spirit. Even as man before being born does nothing that he be made man or become a creature, so he is created and maintained by the almighty power and loving-kindness of God. To the purpose, however, "that God might work in us and we might work with Him; and this may take place outside His realm through His universal omnipotence, or within His kingdom through the power of His Spirit." And this is true also of regeneration.. "The Spirit alone performs this in us . . . However, not without us, since we are reborn and maintained [by Him] precisely that He may work in us and we with Him."¹⁷²

Man could lay claim to a free will toward God only, if God had to obey and do whatever man wills and wishes. But it is a fact rather that God exercises a free will over man so that man is subject to whatever God wills and desires. His judgments are and remain unsearchable, His ways past finding out. This fact alone limits man and excludes his freedom of will in divine things. Pertinent questions, Luther hoped, would thus make clear to Erasmus how deep was the chasm he, Luther, saw fixed between God and man, and thus between free and bound will: "What is man compared with God? What can we do compared with His power? . . . What is our knowledge compared with His wisdom? What is our existence compared with His Being? In short, what is that which is ours against all that which is His?"¹⁷³

The Will Affects all of Life

According to Luther, all of life is affected by the will. This will, undulating, never indifferent, becomes by faith creative love, which forms and transforms man's tie to God, to the world, and to the "neighbor." In establishing that this constantly active energy, which is the will, possesses definite qualities and is not a something purely quantitative increasing or diminishing mechanically, Luther broadened the ethical basis of man's relation to God and man to an unexampled degree. Only in the recognition of the oneness of will and life can critical examination and ethical judgment now accost the self. Ethical value is shifted from outer performance to the inner man; only that can be valid which can claim to be the expression of the integral force and excellence of

life — of the will, the whole of man surrendered to the good.

The "I" can now be scrutinized with respect to its "good will" toward the "thee," the other. Good will alone, the wholeness of man's will together with God's, which is His presence within, imparts to the "I" that strength and assurance, which its unceasing striving and willing, its feeling and desire are seeking. It constitutes the answer to every need man may know in his relation to and entanglement in the multiplicity of things implicit in the word "thee." Here, in the totality of the will, which is the totality of man, man's attitude toward God, man, and the world is determined, and it is here that he is judged. The will is thus the foundation of all individualistic entireness, and all individualistic expression of life. And the concept of person or personality, the feeling for man as a totality, as an "individual," who in this given form occurs but once, is lifted from darkness and set into light.

Luther is great religiously by reason of his undaunted probing into the substance of the will and his incisive analysis of it as the bearer of the unity of life. He is great because of his unwearied striving for a salvation which is the salvation of this most dedicated possession of man, this fountain of unity or disunity in life, the will. And the intensity with which he experienced God, the Transformer of the will, corresponds to his relentless self-examination and paroxysm of despair. He discovered "the heart of God" and knew it as goodness, pure goodness; not goodness beside the "wrath," not goodness toward merit, but pure grace, God's free goodness. "The Father speaks with us through His Son and the Holy Spirit, and thus we hear a fatherly voice, which is sheer, unfathomable, unutterable love and grace, and speaks pure kindness, goodness, sweetness, affection: for that too is God."¹⁷⁴

The intensity of ethical rigor and moral demand which came with Christianity sprang from the need of finding the center of human goodness. Through the centuries of Christian history, the form was, and still is, frequently mistaken for the content. It was Luther's decisive deed to have determined this center of human worth. He discovered and emphasized that inward goodness can be created and supported only in the oneness of human will,

thought, feeling, and disposition, and in its oneness with God. Upon this conception the entire content and acumen of his psychology and religion are grounded.

Is it essential that the will be continuously concentrated on God? or will a single actual (*in actu*) turning to God suffice and be retained in the diversity of impulses agitating everyday life? Does temporal life demand renewal of the "*intentio actualis*" before each deed? To Luther these questions betrayed a calculating piety, freighted with that uncertainty and anxiety that had driven him on his quest for certainty. They betokened a mechanistic religion which his conscience had forced him to forsake in order that he might find a living godliness. They were the issue of legalistic and moralistic conceptions, which in the first instance belong to natural life. They were prompted by an assurance of salvation by works, by conformity to, by observance of the strict letter rather than the spirit of the Law; by a belief practiced in a morality divested of all religious character, reckoning with accounts, with debit and credit. Such questions ignored that in the Christian religion nothing is valid but "Creation and Grace on the part of God," and acceptance and faith on the part of man. And Luther's analysis concludes clearly and logically: "Since unending sin inheres in our flesh as long as we live on earth, and since there is neither end nor cessation to our laxness and error, we must truly have an eternal and continuous forgiveness."¹⁷⁵

The rebirth of the "old man" does not wholly eradicate all tendencies to self-seeking. Sin persists in the life of the redeemed. The ever-present power of self-love can be and is radically broken by the love of Christ, but it is not enduringly destroyed. The very pretense to perfection and perfectness is a mark of sin. Our faith in Christ can grasp only weak and null beginnings, only a glimpse of the first fruits of wisdom, only a few fragments of the boundless height, breadth, and depth of the truth that God is.

Faith and the love springing from it are the work and gift of a divine deed creative in man, yet withal a concrete personal experience. Abiding in this love and faith denotes continual striving and decision, a wresting of these goods and blessings from the Father. Growing in faith and strength is a life-long process; the sinner, despite the forgiveness of his sins, falls again and again into the

sin of unbelief and lack of trust.

Thus Luther's exegesis was indeed a new step forward in the development introduced by Christianity. The sincerity and profundity with which the problem was attacked at its root, the fervor and intuitive insight by which the very heart of it was recognized and established by Luther, reveal a vitality and depth which give to him a pivotal position in the history of Christian thinking. The genius of Romance peoples had forged the inwardness intrinsic in Christianity into an ingenious, austere discipline of the soul and had therewith erected a mighty hierarchy; but the German spirit in Luther searched into the very foundations of religious freedom.

THE FUNCTION OF THE LAW

Luther did not depart from Christian theology and tradition in his enumeration of the uses of the Law: first, the Law should direct and guide the way in political and civil matters. Each law is given to curb sin and to restrain the wicked. Civil laws are ordained by God to arrest or to punish crime. For this purpose God instituted governments, parents, laws, restrictions, and civil ordinances. Second, it is the function of the Law to confront the Christian with his sin, to make him conscious of sin, to accuse him, condemn him, humble him, and prepare him for the consummation of grace and faith. This second purpose of the Law is spiritual and divine: it is to reveal man's blindness, depravity, ignorance, contempt of God, to warn of death, hell, damnation. Outside the Law there is no consciousness of transgression. The thunderbolts, the flash of lightning, and the sound of trumpets attending the proclamation of Mosaic Law on Mount Sinai indicated God's wrath upon man's monstrous self-righteousness. Third, the Law is active in the preservation of faith. In making spiritual transgressions manifest and explicit, the Law arouses the conscience, dispels all illusion of self-righteousness, imbues with the fear of God, and persuades the sinner to beseech God's mercy.

The Law imparts no power of fulfillment of its commandments. It neither offers nor effects justification. It can not save the sinner. On the one hand, the Law in its majesty, its holiness, accuses, ter-

rorizes the conscience, reveals the wrath and judgment of God upon man's guilt, kills. On the other hand, the Law is a true minister and handmaiden, which impels the sinner to Christ. To live unto the Law, that is, to believe oneself capable of obedience to God's Law, is to die unto God. To die unto the Law, that is, to know that human strength is incapable of obedience to God's Law, is to live unto God, is to find life through faith in Christ Jesus. "Therefore the Law is also a light that lights, that makes visible and manifest not God's grace, also not His righteousness, through which salvation and eternal life are attained, but rather sin, infirmity, death, God's wrath and judgment; that is the peculiarly right function of the Law . . . The Gospel, however, is an entirely different light, which illumines affrighted hearts, quickens, comforts, and sustains them."¹⁷⁶ Man comes to the knowledge of God either by way of the Law, which is the way of experiencing God's wrath, or by way of the Gospel, which is the revelation of His love.

The law of right and wrong, the "*cognitionem legalem*," is known to reason, to philosophy. "But," Luther points out, "that is not the right knowledge of God, which comes through the Law, be it that of Moses or that planted in our nature." Men think "if I do that I shall be saved." In this "they are heathen" who may conclude as much "by way of philosophy."¹⁷⁷ The direct consciousness concerning the divine Law "which is written in our hearts,"¹⁷⁸ is not identical with reason or *ratio* in Luther's sense. The activity of reason is rather the process of man's thinking and reasoning disposed to and oriented in the carnal and visible world, and as such it is opposed to the divine will begotten in the heart. This it can not even rightly understand.

The way of the Gospel is that "of grace and truth." Reason can not know the profundity of divine wisdom and will and the depth of His grace and mercy; for the God of Grace is hidden from it; of Him it surmises not even a tittle and must speak of Him as the blind speak of color. Reason beholds the God of law, justice, punishment, the Judge exacting obedience. It observes the letter of the Law. But beyond this it can not fathom the Father whose mercy is revealed in His Son.

It is true that God's demands coincide in part with that which

man calls moral or rational. The Stoics sought to prove this moral law identical with "nature" or "reason." The Law thus became the point of contact for a rationalistic understanding of Christianity. The Law written in man's heart from the beginning is not to be confused with man's reason or reasoning power, and its natural law. Luther conceived of the Law in its abiding unity and universality as divine Law. It is a phenomenon of the universal spirit as well as an objective force, divine, willed, and established as the inviolable expression of God's will, ineradically "implanted in the hearts of all men at Creation."¹⁷⁹ It is the norm, fixing the fundamental relation between Creator and man. In substance the Mosaic Code is the same as this universal, divine law.

Yet despite all this Luther knew that, "men's hearts are so darkened by the devil, that [God's Laws] are neither seen nor recognized."¹⁸⁰ "For no one can believe in and trust God except the Holy Ghost first illumines his heart."¹⁸¹ Man in his natural unregenerate state can not fulfill the divine Law of God, for the Law demands more than egoistic self-assertiveness; and precisely because the Law is greater than the rational self, does the Law annihilate the natural, selfish man, so that God may impart life through its fulfillment in love and faith. Here alone is the divine Law recognized and fulfilled.

Convinced that the expression of God's will is implanted in all men, Luther could maintain that "even if Moses had never written the Law, the Law is written by nature into the heart of every man. Over and above this, God gave the Jews a written Law, that is, the Ten Commandments, which are nothing other than the law of nature . . . That which Moses recorded in the Decalogue, we feel in our conscience."¹⁸² Thus Moses is not the author of the Decalogue. But he "introduces God Himself, who as the universal God of all heathen, gives the Ten Commandments orally to this particular people [the Jews] . . . [Moses] adorns them as His Law, arranges them with greater perspicacity and nicety than anyone else could have done."¹⁸³ God is the author. Moses is but the interpreter of His eternal Law. For one must bear in mind that "the Ten Commandments pervaded the whole world not only before Moses, but even before the time of Abraham and all the patriarchs. Even if no Moses had come or there had been no

Abraham, these Commandments would have had to rule in all men from the beginning, as they did and still do. For it stands to reason that all creatures hold God to be God and honor His name."¹⁸⁴ Immanuel Kant in the eighteenth century will acquiesce in this assertion when he finds the proof of the existence of God in the "starry skies above us" and in "the moral law within us."

In its form of "thou shalt" the Decalogue is of time transitory and refers to the dominion of the Law. The Ten Commandments, however, have divine, eternal content, which will not pass away. This content continues mighty under the rule of the Gospel. Indeed, the Gospel has its issue in the spiritual demand of the Law. Although God in His absoluteness is above and bound to no law, He can not as Creator, in relation to the world, retract His Law. Whoever sins against it, that is, against the righteousness of the absolute, exalted, majestic God, sins against Him. For sin is withdrawal from God, "a lack of trust in God";¹⁸⁵ "imperfect faith, imperfect hope, imperfect love."¹⁸⁶ And sin against Him, against His righteousness, evokes an irrevocable, eternal curse; it expels from grace, light, truth, and life. Yet God is good. He punishes sin and hates the sinner insofar as he remains in sin. To the conscience He appears wrathful, and engenders terror and torment. In His nature however, God remains love. The effort of His wrath serves love, for He wills to save all men. Our brooding and inquiry will never comprehend this paradox. He reveals Himself in and through Christ, "to make known His heart and will. In Christ, He is sheer, heartfelt, rapturous, unfathomable love and grace; outside Him nothing but wrath and displeasure."¹⁸⁷ He uses His divine Law that the sinner may come to know Him and His great love revealed in the Gospel.

Luther differentiated between the Law and the Gospel and assigned to each its proper use and office. In his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* he asserts that he had found no awareness of the difference between Law and the Gospel on the part of monks, canonists, schoolmen, nor in the books of the early Fathers. Augustine had a slight understanding of it. Jerome and others did not know it. For centuries there was a strange silence touching this dissimilarity in all schools and churches. This brought men's consciences into grave danger. There must be a

clear distinction between Gospel and Law, if the true manner of justification is to be known; then it is simple to distinguish faith from works, Christ from Moses. For the Law no longer terrifies and torments when the Gospel and faith are revealed. The Gospel quickens, comforts, and raises up terrified consciences. It may seem a small matter to confuse Law and Gospel, faith and works, but it creates more mischief than man's brain can conceive. For either Christ must live and the Law in its unfulfillable demands perish, or the Law remain to bind the conscience in dread and fear, and Christ perish because His work has been rejected. Christ and the Law can not dwell side by side in the conscience. It is either grace or Law.

And still, albeit these two—Law and Gospel—are separate and far asunder, to continue Luther's thought, yet they are most nearly joined together in one heart. Nothing is more closely conjoined than are fear and trust, sin and grace. They are so bound together that the one is swallowed up in the other. For it is God's decree from eternity that the way to Christ is by the Law. "The Law kills, but the grace of God quickens; grace gives succor and does all the Law demands, which of itself [fear] can not do. Therefore St. Paul calls the Law a Law of death and of sin, and says (Rom. 8: 2, 3, 4): The Law of the living Spirit in Christ has delivered me from the Law of sin and death."¹⁸⁸ These two ways of knowing God differentiate between sin and grace, between God outside Christ and in Christ. God is not only our Creator, He is also our Saviour.

Luther freed his age from confusion and ambiguity by pointing out first of all that Law and Gospel do not represent two stages in the history of religious development. Also, it is inaccurate to identify the Law with the Old Testament and the Gospel with the New Testament. The distinction between Law and Gospel, in his analysis, is rather a distinction between letter and spirit, whether referred to the Law or to the Gospel. It is the difference between an exposition of what God demands of man and the realization and fulfillment of that demand. The message concerning Christ can readily become law if the Holy Spirit does not convert the content of the message into a present, living reality for the believer. Outside such reality, and outside the Holy Spirit, the Gos-

pel of Christ is but a letter which presents an idea and ideal — it is a letter which judges but does not help toward attainment of the ideal.

Divine Law proceeds from God in the Holy Spirit, and it is therefore His holiness, His order, His purpose, His majesty. It exceeds any letter, any human understanding. In its holiness, in its majesty, in its righteousness it must destroy sin. The Law is identical with its fulfillment in the Gospel in Christ. In the Gospel the fulfillment of the divine Law is revealed and offered as a gift, which is the Holy Spirit in actuality, and therewith the Holy Spirit of the Law. The Father who is creative in His love for man, the Son who as the Redeemer made this love available, the Holy Spirit as Sanctifier and Sustainer in faith, in their Holy Trinity, are the Spirit, the fulfillment of the divine Law. In the Spirit, in spirit, Law and Gospel are one.

The Law and the Gospel may be a letter. The Law is a letter when man believes himself capable in his own strength of understanding, indeed, of obeying and fulfilling the demands of the Law, even in part. In this sense the Law is devoid of the Holy Spirit, since its holy, majestic nature is not recognized. The letter of the Law alone is death without life, sin without grace, suffering without comfort. The Gospel is but a letter when man beholds in Christ an idea, a model whom he would imitate. In such a conception Christ, the Redeemer, is not needed, nor is there any need of the Holy Spirit. The actual presence of the Holy Spirit alone decides whether Christ is truly present in faith, or whether it is an idea of Him to which man clings. In other words, the presence of the Holy Spirit determines whether faith and the new life are really faith and a new life, or just a copy, an imitation still under the dominion of the letter of the Law.

Luther emphasized and repeated that the Holy Spirit is the beginning and the end of the work of Redemption. The Holy Spirit, in so far as in His nature He is the holiness, the majesty of God, is the origin of the Law. The Law is the expression of God in His majesty and holiness. And when the Holy Spirit confronts the sinner with the divine Law in its holiness and majesty, the Law can do no other than accuse, condemn, and kill. The Law in the Holy Spirit crushes him whom it would subject to itself. By the

power of the divine Law the Holy Spirit bruises and humbles the sinner that he may flee to Christ. He leads the sinful one to despair which is salutary only when He can present the reality of justification in Christ.

Until the Holy Spirit is received in grace, He remains the accuser, the Judge in the Law. When the work of salvation has become a living reality within the heart, Christ sends the Holy Spirit as a gift, as the Comforter, Helper, and Dispenser of life. Therewith His activity is transferred to the Gospel. To be sure, He continues in the Law as the one who humbles; also the pious. But the work of Christ, which opened the floodgates of the love of the Father, created for the Holy Spirit His other function, that of creating a new life and maintaining it in faith in the hearts of men.

Lacking the work of the Holy Spirit, Christ can not be a real presence. In Luther's view Christ can be truly present in faith only in the Holy Spirit, understood in His actual reality. The presence of Christ outside the sphere of the Holy Spirit is either spiritualistic mysticism or moralistic imitation of Christ. The Holy Spirit and Christ belong together. Only in the Holy Spirit does the living Christ manifest Himself. There is no other living Christ.

Therefore Luther can say that God judges and punishes our non-acceptance of His love, our failure to fulfill the Law not unto damnation, but unto our salvation. "Holy Scriptures praise two works of God: He kills and He quickens, wounds and heals, destroys and helps, condemns and saves, humiliates and exalts . . . The letter of the Law brings about that none may stand before His wrath; the spirit effects that in His grace none is corrupt . . . Divine Law is good, just, holy, and spiritual, yet it is the letter [of the Law] that kills; for it requires that man be good, just, holy, spiritual, equal to its commands in all things. However, it turns out man is wicked, unjust, sinful, of the flesh, unequal to the Law in every measure. This inadequacy delivers him over to eternal death, to the wrath and displeasure of God, who demands that the Law be fulfilled to the last jot and tittle."¹⁸⁹ Whosoever would put his faith in the letter must know that he trusts in a law that signifies death. The spirit however is nothing other than grace.

For where the Spirit of God is, there is freedom, there is the fulfillment of the Law implicit in grace. There man is free; but not free to act against God's Law nor against the authority of love. God's righteousness is His Law, to be sure, but His righteousness is nothing other than His mercy. In Christ He is a Father, and the greatness of His mercy exceeds by far the greatness of His wrath. Law and Gospel belong together. The child of Adam, called "according to his flesh and blood a natural, old, or outer man," remains under the Law throughout life; the new man, who "according to his soul is called a spiritual, new, inner man,"¹⁹⁰ who believes in Christ, is the freest Lord of all and subject to no Law. For "no man is made better [regenerated] by the Law . . . for the Law neither helps nor does it impart grace; rather does it command and demand that man do that which either he can not or will not do. But the Spirit, divine grace, inspires with strength and virtue of heart, indeed, creates a new man, who rejoices in God's commandments, who gladly does whatsoever he should. No letter can compass this spirit, nor can it be written with ink in stone or in books, as the Law can, but is a quickened writing of the Holy Spirit in the heart. . . . Through this spirit or grace man does what the Law demands."¹⁹¹ The "Spirit makes [man] good, pious, holy, and spiritual . . . and thereby all things the Law demands are become nature and substance in him."¹⁹¹

FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW

Luther derived good and evil from the will: evil hates the Law; for the Law of God sets forth His demands and establishes in Him the authority of the judge, who judges evil and who exacts from man that he be perfect. His command is: "Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy." Lev. 19:2. Only the fulfilling of this Law can satisfy a just God and achieve atonement with Him. In Luther's analysis, the demands of the Law are fulfilled when the will is actuated spontaneously by divine love of the Law. Willing and feeling, Law and love must become one, for love alone is the fulfilling of the Law. To bring this to pass, a "will to good" must be established, the "will to evil" transformed.

Liberation from the terror of the "wrath" of God begotten by

the Law, that is, freedom from the Law, is to be had in faith in the merciful God indwelling in the Word which is Christ alone. Being in Christ is one and the same as being free of the demands of the Law and made a child and heir of the kingdom of God on earth. This release, this kingdom, in Luther's further interpretation, is brought about by subjecting, binding, and securing the will "into the Law of Christ," this "perfect law of liberty," as St. James sees it. This Law of the Gospel is spiritual, free. This "Law of Christ," which is faith, and love, and is of the Spirit, is the living flame which wills and does willingly, joyously, in freedom, whatever the spirit of the Law demands. The "Law of Christ" is therefore the fulfillment of the Law. And fulfillment sets free. "This is the meaning of the fulfillment of the Law: that its commands be carried out in joy and love, that life be godlike and well-pleasing, oblivious of the compulsion of the Law, as if there were no Law or judgment. It is the Holy Spirit that gives such delight and voluntary love into our hearts. . . . Thus it comes about that faith alone justifies and fulfills the Law; for faith implants the Spirit of the merit of Christ. The Spirit, however, makes a joyous and unfettered heart as the Law demands; and good works proceed from faith itself."¹⁹² Faith is such a divine work in us, it transforms us, we are born anew in God. Its issue is autonomy of faith. It is faith, which in truth possesses that, through which the Law is fulfilled; the Spirit, and the Love that it be fulfilled. For "faith is nothing where Love [i. e., the fulfilling of the Law] does not follow."¹⁹³

The Introduction to the *Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*, 1522, makes clear what is involved in the fulfilling of the Law: "In the first place we must be learned in the language and know what Paul would convey by these words law, sin, grace, faith, righteousness, flesh, spirit. . . . The word law must not be given human meaning, as if it were to teach what works to perform and from which to abstain. . . . God judges according to the foundation of the heart. Therefore His Law demands the heart's foundation, and is not satisfied with works, but rather rebukes the works done outside the innermost core of the heart as hypocrisy and falsehood. . . . Where there is no voluntary joy toward the good, there the heart's joy does not cling to the Law of God. . . . For though

you outwardly keep the Law and its works, out of fear of punishment or out of love for the reward: you are still doing it all without the free joy and love to the Law, hence with disinclination and under coercion; you would rather do otherwise, if there were no Law. Thus ensues that you are hostile to the Law in your inmost heart. The Law is spiritual. . . . If the Law belonged to the physical world, works would be sufficient unto it; since it is spiritual, however, none can satisfy it, except that whatever is done proceed from the foundation of the heart. But no one other than the Spirit of God can give such a heart; He can make man equal to the Law, so that man's heart is inspired with love to the Law and that he henceforth does all things, not out of fear or coercion, but with all his heart."¹⁹⁴

Luther did not, like the Pharisees, think of the Commandments of God as individual articles and paragraphs of the Law, which God asks man to fulfill according to the barren letter of the word. The whole content of the Law, the intent of every single Commandment of God is comprehended and inclusively expressed in one Commandment, called by Luther the "Sum of all Commandments,"¹⁹⁵ "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" . . . and "thy neighbor as thyself." "To love your neighbor as yourself is to love in such a manner that you spare neither skill, talent, nor honor in seeking your neighbor's good and welfare, and that you prefer it to your own advantage. A Christian must be willing, if the need arise, to give his life for the sake of Christ, and for the sake of love."¹⁹⁶ For the love that springs from faith makes us free and eager to do that whereunto the Law forces us.

All commandments are fulfilled only in and through love. Each separate Commandment exemplifies this one command and applies it to particular cases. "The standard of the fulfillment of every single commandment is love; and the only true consummation of the Law is that which proceeds from love. As the full performance of the Law issues from love, so it also finds its boundary in it. All laws, human and divine, commanding any external action, must not bind beyond the bounds of love; love shall interpret all laws. Where there is no love, it [the Law] is already at an end; thus [without love] the Law is harmful, be it what it

may. . . . For all laws are given to institute love alone, for, as St. Paul says, 'Love is the fulfilling of the Law!' " *Item*: Luther adds, "we are under obligation for nothing more than that we love one another. . . . Since it is the object of the Law to establish love at all times, it [the Law] must cease, if it endeavors to run counter to love."¹⁰⁷

To be impelled by a love greater than self, greater than the logic of the word of the command, to be in very deed initiate and interior to the Spirit of God and actuated by it was Luther's way to freedom. Faith and love alone can fulfill God's Law. Where he does not possess these in full measure, the Christian must hold himself to the text of the individual commandments as far as he can. All particular commandments purpose solely to prescribe love.

Fulfillment of the Law implies freedom from guilt of sin, freedom of conscience, and freedom of the will in the particular sense of St. James and St. Paul; that is, freedom of the will to faith and love. And this means freedom from human authority in spiritual things. The freedom of the will has its being in Christ abiding within together with the Holy Spirit, and a seeming paradox, this divine freedom can and does exist side by side with the passive surrender of man's will to the will of God. Free will is not the freedom of one's own selfish will, it is the freedom sprung from grace, which is the affirmation and performance of the will of God. The will is free in grace alone. Moreover, precisely this absolute resignation to God's will carries with it an autonomous will to faith; it is the paradox of a voluntary *Must* to faith. Surrender to God's will is the will to faith: "Thy kingdom come! Thy will be done!"

Luther here forecast the Kantian autonomy of ethical willing, that is, willing the good wholly for the sake of the good; yet, despite all affinity of profundity and probing, there is a difference between Luther's will to the will of God—the Good, His kingdom—and Kant's conception of the struggle between inclination and duty—the good in the realm of reason. Luther's love of God builds on Him who is the "Source of all Blessedness"; while Kant's motive to do the good proceeds from pure "delight" in the good. Kant's dualistic concept does not in Luther's case have the same

stark austerity and rigorism it assumes in the philosopher; Luther sees God as bountiful productivity, hence his ethic is born in the realm of religion, in an own complete independence and autonomy.

Of the true Christian it can then be said that through the indwelling Christ he is "free of all laws" and subject to none either within or without, except to the "Law of Christ." And the "Law of Christ" is there, where "man is wholly without concern, free, will-less, and knows nothing more than to await God's will."¹⁹⁸ The good will, good conscience, is then steeped in faith, that great incomprehensible treasure, this gift of freedom, the kingdom of heaven, unutterable, divine, which transforms the believer into "a child and heir of God" and makes him "Christlike." This faith can not be lauded enough; for the Christian is "greater than the whole world because he carries within his heart the seemingly insignificant gift, faith." Yet, "the tiniest fragment of this gift and ransom, which he possesses in faith is greater than heaven and earth, because Christ, who is this precious gift, is greater."¹⁹⁹

The kingdom of heaven and eternal life are a reality in every crisis in which the decision to faith unites with God, but the perfect and complete fulfillment is still hindered by the "realm of Satan," which is sin, disobedience, vain bitterness, anger, and hatred ever present in imperfect mortality. The petition, "Thy kingdom come!" is still a relative, not an absolute kingdom, perfection, and fulfillment; for the Absolute abides concealed in the Holy Spirit, who dwells in man still as "the hidden God." Nonetheless, though the consummation of "the kingdom" in us may be but fragmentary, it can be achieved as assuredly as the love of God is infused into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. The "God of Hope," whom we touch, "fills us with joy and peace in faith and by the strength of the Holy Spirit we have complete hope and in it we already dwell in heaven."²⁰⁰ The complete fulfillment of the Law, which is perfect Christian freedom, is that eternity where faith has become perfect love.

THE ACT OF GRACE

Luther knew that the Law, in its purity and holiness, is unfillable; for in the light of the unreconciled disunion in man's will, its complete connotation remains incomprehensible to an ego-

centric will. For beyond its seemingly clear, reasonable, rational aspect, the Law partakes of the hidden Godhead, is related to the "*Deus absconditus*," is the bearer of that which exceeds the empirical or practical experience of man: it is the revelation of the Absolute. In the final analysis the fulfillment of the Law is not merely a moral problem: it is rooted in the ontological.

The sinner is confronted by the Author of the Law, by the Spirit of God in His holiness and "nakedness." And when the Spirit appears in the Law as the "*Deus nudus*," that is, outside Christ, He is the tyrant who hurls the guilty relentlessly into suffering, agony, hell, and death. To be summoned into the presence of God the Spirit, into the presence of the source of the Law and the Judge, whose wrath is "a consuming fire," spells catastrophe. No one can face the "*Deus nudus*," God in His unveiled holiness and majesty, and live. Only in the world to come shall we behold Him face to face.

Since it can not imbue with the ability to keep it, the Law is a curse to the disobedient. The transgressor, forfeit to God's wrath, to "separation from God,"²⁰¹ "feels God's anger and carries his own hell with him wherever he is."²⁰² The wrath of God as experienced by Luther does not, like man's wrath, consist in hatred, envy, complete extinction of love, nor can it be likened to the devil's rage which would condemn all men to eternal damnation. The wrath of God is rather the righteousness of God, His love of righteousness, it is the good, it is active justice, the implacable demand that the Law be fulfilled. For the Law is good, and its first commandment requires: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me!" Yet man's chief sin in unbelief, the spring and fountain-head of all sin.

This not-knowing-God, not-accepting His love constitutes man's sin. "Therefore Christ designates unbelief as the only sin."²⁰³ The heart entertains vain and false opinions concerning God, is persuaded that God is other in His nature than He really is, does not accept His utter goodness nor believe His mercy and favor; and that is idolatry. God, the God of life and salvation, exercises His wrath reluctantly, against His nature and against His will. He is obliged and compelled thereto. For outside Christ He is an angry God, the enemy of sin, the Judge, even though "His angry love would harm no one."

Satan makes every effort to separate the "*Deus nudus*" from the "*Deus incarnatus*," to terrify the sinner by presenting a fiendish caricature of God and depicting His Law as a power of destruction. He inculcates the sinner with stinging reproach, impeaches him before the Law destitute of the Gospel, before God, the Giver and Holy Spirit of the Law bereft of the God of love in Christ. The accusations of Satan, that is, evil conscience, identical with "unbelief and lack of trust," "a horrible beast," "hell itself," strike fear and terror into the soul, and prohibit approach to the Holy One. Satan, to whom the paradox of forgiveness of sin beyond good and evil is an affront, drives the sinner to hopelessness and despair, magnifies the sin and plunges him into "*tristitia*." He deprives him of comfort by withholding Christ as the refuge from the onslaughts of the "wrath of God." This struggle between God and Satan takes place within the heart when the Holy Spirit as the God of law and justice is conquered by the Spirit as the gift of faith in Christ. Even in the torture of an evil conscience God's grace is active, and the Holy Spirit within refuses acquiescence to Satan and makes strong the faith in Christ.

In this conflict the Holy Spirit is actually present in the tyrannized and terrified conscience; but this same Holy Spirit sends unutterable groanings to the Father and to His Son imploring that the lost and condemned sinner be led into the kingdom of the Gospel. It is the Holy Spirit who afflicts with tribulation and death by the Law, and who grants comfort by the Gospel. Only in connection with the Law in its spiritual use is the Gospel the Gospel, for it is the message of deliverance to them that are under the tyranny of the Law. Wrath and grace are united in one and the same God in such a way that wrath is subordinated to grace. God reveals Himself as the God of Law not that He might destroy eternally or condemn to hell eternally, but that He may bring the sinner through death to life.

Sin, death, and the devil are manifestations of the cosmic realm of His wrath. "The Greek Cerberus, the Hebrew Scorphur, is the hellish dog of three jaws. The three muzzles are: sin, the Law, death."²⁰⁴ Salvation is possible when these hostile forces are conquered through love in Christ, which is far greater than the

love of the Creator. If in the creation God's love endows us with the abundance of His goods and gifts, in salvation He lavishes upon us His love, the fathomless depths of His heart.

The Law requires complete reliance upon God's mercy, and upon His justice. It requires an ardor of mind, a free flow of affection, unequivocal obedience and surrender to the Holy Spirit, a joyful heart to live spontaneously unto God. But such abandon, gladness, willing inclination and flowing love is in none but by the Spirit and His vital energy and moving impulse in the heart. "By my own strength I can not believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord . . . but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, sanctified and kept me in true faith. . . . He enlightens me with His gifts so that I know Jesus as my Saviour, trust and believe, rejoice and take comfort in Him. . . . He has sanctified me in true faith."²⁰⁵

In the impartment of grace the merciful God forgives sin and bestows the gift of faith in Christ and with it the righteousness inherent in it. Inward spiritual gifts are conferred by God through Christ Jesus; specifically, the power and disposition to yield obedience to the divine Law through the imputation of its fulfillment in Christ. Grace is the free, unmerited love and favor of God.

Traditional, Augustinian conceptions held that in the act of grace the Holy Spirit infuses true love of God into the heart, and that in this love the commands of the Law are joyously obeyed. In Luther's "*theologia crucis*" the concepts "love of God," "grace" are wholly at variance with those of Augustine. Augustine related the love of God to the love of self in the assumption that the self, thought of as the idealistic urge within, had been sublimated by the love of God. This idealistic concept of God thinks of man as dualistically divided into a lower, sensually directed part, and a higher part directed toward the spiritual realities. Since the higher nature, being spiritual in itself, has a particular affinity for the Spirit of God, infused grace is made synonymous with the sublimation of this spiritual part in man. To be sure, in its own strength it can not achieve this sublimation, but infused grace commingles with the nobler component in man and leads it to perfection in the supernatural sphere.

The basic concept here is a dualism, a contrast between flesh

and spirit. Thomas Aquinas, it is true, asserted there is a fixed gulf between all spirituality pertaining to the works of Creation and the Spirit of God. But the foundation upon which the scholastic synthesis of idealism and the Bible, metaphysics and faith is built, is the theory that the Spirit of God and the spirit of man are spirit, that the spirit of man is impelled toward the spiritual, that grace is charged with the task of purifying, refining, sublimating this impulsion and guiding it to its high goal.

Luther sought in vain for any trace of goodness in the self or any urge toward sublimity. Rather was he forced to hate, condemn, abhor the self so totally depraved, so totally under the judgment and condemnation of God, the self, the very core of sin in man. And Luther was fully aware that the Holy Spirit alone can instil this utter and unconditioned hatred of the sinner's self.

The thought of a higher spiritual nature condemning the lower sensual nature was not involved here. With Luther it was not a matter of the spirit-flesh contrast, the "*caro*"-"*spiritus*" conflict of the Middle Ages, for he did not approach the problem from the point of view of man. Therefore he did not think of spirit as the noble part of man, the fount of his striving for God and the things of the spirit, nor did he denominate flesh the sensual nature of man, his external, corruptible part. Luther subjected the contrast to a spiritual and biblical interpretation: "*spiritus*" is the whole of man ruled by the Spirit of God; flesh, "*caro*," is the whole of man lacking the Spirit of God. Luther recoiled before all of man, before his depraved totality. For outside the Spirit of God and alienated from Him every and each part and particle of man is the self. And the self is subservient to "*concupiscentia*," together with all its ideal striving, love of the good, and self-righteous works.

But how is condemnation of the total self brought about? This question pursued and terrified the young Luther in the monastery. If he himself crushed and annihilated pride, this selfish self, what was gained? Nothing more than a refined form of pride assuming the pose of humility and self-accusation. In the end he had to conclude that man in his natural state does not and can not condemn utterly his own self. God alone can do that. The Holy Spirit, active within the heart as the judgment and wrath of God, makes

aware and conscious of sin. By His actual presence He infuses the love of God into the heart. However, this love is in no wise a natural, idealistic, sublimated love of the good infused in man by the grace of God. It is rather the love of God for the sinner, the love which simultaneously judges and redeems.

Luther rejoiced in the incomprehensible God, who hates all evil unto annihilation, whose love judges and condemns sin and sinner, that He may make room for the work of redemption. And this act of grace is initiated and carried out by the Holy Spirit alone. He brings about that the sinner's will conforms to God's spontaneously and in joy.

If forgiveness of sin could be won through one's own effort, to what purpose was Christ born? Of what significance are His suffering and death, His resurrection, His victory over sin, death, and the devil? His work would be meaningless. Victory over the sin of the whole world, and death, and the wrath of God was no work for any creature. The power of sin and death could be broken only by a greater power. God alone could bring righteousness, life, and mercy to light. In attributing these achievements to Christ, Scriptures pronounce Christ to be God forever. And faith in Him invests with His sinlessness. Therefore, Luther concluded, all the commands of the Law now require but one consummate work: faith in Christ. Here alone is forgiveness of sin.

The earlier theologians, Aristotelian in their logic, based the retention or remission of sin upon the sinner's righteousness won through good works. Forgiveness took away the sin. Luther objected to this view and defined forgiveness of sin as the absolution granted in grace, grace which no longer imputes the sin. Only by the transformation wrought in each act of contrition and grace in faith, in which the whole being is transformed in love, made anew in the complete surrender to the will of God, does the sinner have forgiveness.

The act of grace, regeneration, sanctification is the work of God and of His sanctity in us; it is our justification through the Holy Spirit in Christ. Christ, the Spirit of love, is sent into the believer's heart, so that he is made a tower of the Law through Christ by means of faith in the Word of promise of forgiveness

of sin. This is the gift of the merciful Father. For grace is the favor, the mercy, the good will of God toward men. The gift, by the Holy Spirit, is poured into our hearts. That is, the Spirit infuses the Word into the heart so that its spiritual meaning may be seized; thereby He imbues the heart with His Holiness, and the believer is turned to the good and away from evil. It is the blessedness of grace that the sin which remains in us is not imputed to us, and that we are accounted righteous before God. For "He writes pure fiery flames into the heart and quickens it, that it [the heart] breaks forth in fiery tongue and active hand; then is the sinner made a new man, aware of being endowed with an entirely different, renewed mind, disposition, and temper. And in everything there is now understanding, light, courage, and love, which burns and is eager toward all things that please God."²⁰⁶ Sanctified, the believer becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit. And his prayer, "Thy kingdom come!" is answered in the act of grace, as Luther explains it in the *Small Catechism*: "When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life, here in time, and hereafter in eternity."

Through grace the egotistical will, hostile to God, is turned to accord with the will of God. In the foundation of the will the selfless, self-evident surrender takes place through the Holy Spirit. There is no possibility of a casuistic pact with relativities, by which man too can contribute his small share; the innermost will must be and is transformed through grace, wholly transformed; grace provides the impulsion, spontaneous, free, to overcome the egoism. Grace is not something that is added to the natural powers of man, grace is volition and performance, begotten not of man, but of God. In grace the will is free, and ethical deeds inevitably and spontaneously spring from its promptings.

Christ, by the work of the Holy Spirit, presents to us the Law fulfilled in Him. No longer does it demand, accuse, terrorize. In Christ the demand is translated into the revelation of the love of God the Father; the terror is converted into a gift, which is Christ; the accusation is transformed into forgiveness and eternal life in the Holy Spirit. The work of Christ did not abolish the content of the Law, which is divine and never changes. It abro-

gated the form of the old Law. Slavish fear has become joy, the demand a gift bearing love, strength, and life in the Triune God.

Law in its alien and objective might is abrogated—as such it is indeed always impossible of fulfillment and remains at all times a judgment—and that which was rational or moral has through the act of grace become the content of a quickened striving, a participation in an infinity of life which moral laws and ethical systems can not exhaust. Through the act of grace, according to Luther, the Law is written into the heart, that is, the Holy Spirit pours into our hearts that love, which is truly “the Law of Christ” and is the fulfillment of the Law of Moses; it is law without being law, without measure, without goal; it knows no boundary and extends beyond anything that the Law prescribes or can command. “His Law is faith, that is, a living, spiritual flame kindling the hearts through the Holy Spirit, that they are born anew and turned, that they desire, will, do, and are nothing other than that which the words of the Law of Moses require and command.”²⁰⁷ It is that force of love not to be conceived of in any juridical formula of law or justice. Only love, born out of faith, can unite heart, will, and law and thus fulfill the Law. For God, the Absolute, omniscient and omnipotent, requires the whole of man. This is salvation in grace, the capacity to love what God loves, to will what God wills—in freedom. Fulfillment of the Law is nothing less than the realization of God.

To be received into communion with the divine life of the Triune God requires the tranquillity of complete surrender. It requires “being still” in awaiting God’s activity within. This is achieved in total alienation from the selfish self, from all self-will, from carnal “flesh,” so that the deep glow of the Holy Spirit may enter the heart. In the preface to his *Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans* Luther defined the terms “flesh” and “spirit.” “You ought not to understand [these expressions] to mean that ‘flesh’ refers to that which has to do with the carnal alone, and ‘spirit’ as that which refers to man’s inwardness of heart. Flesh . . . is whatever is born of the flesh, the whole man, body and soul, reason and senses . . . When St. Paul says that the flesh weakens the Law, he does not refer to unchastity, but to every sin, most of all to unbelief, which is the supreme perversity. On the other

hand, he also designates him as spiritual who is occupied with the most external activities; as for instance Christ, when He washes the disciples' feet, and Peter when he fishes. Thus 'flesh' denotes inward and outward life and the doing of those things which serve the body's need and temporal life; and spirit denotes inward and outward life and activity directed toward things of the spirit and future life."²⁰⁸

And so it comes about that one and the same man is spiritual and carnal, righteous and sinful, good and evil. Captive to evil and controlled by it, man is a sinner, and as such he may be denominated "flesh." However, that does not signify that "flesh" in itself is evil and sin sensuality. As soon as the Holy Spirit reestablishes the direction toward the divine, "flesh" may be called "spirit," and body and soul are no longer dualistically thought of, but are established in "freedom." God is glorified in the body, the "flesh" is His sanctified temple. And so in the midst of the created world, nature is awakened and made the impression and expression of the infinite and eternal God. Inner essence and outer reality are not separated as understood by Luther; the physical and metaphysical interpenetrate, God's immanence and remoteness are harmonized in His grace, in the sanctification brought about by the Holy Spirit.

In Luther's analysis grace is the work of the Holy Spirit and the gift of God: death of the "old man" and salvation active and creative in the redeemed new life. Even as Luther rejected the scholastic view that the Holy Spirit is the transcendent cause of a new, supernatural nature in man, thus he also dissented from Augustine's doctrine of justification by grace, the belief that the divine efficacy of the sacrament imparts a new nature to man by means of infused grace. Luther is certain of the real presence of God, of the Holy Spirit in the affliction and tribulation of the despairing soul. No infused grace can intercede for man with "unutterable groanings," but only God alone. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit, actually and personally present in the heart.

In the view of Thomas Aquinas, of Aristotelian intellectualism, of Augustinian metaphysics, or of Scholasticism, God is in the main thought of transcendently, that is, as the distant, supreme good, for which the idealistic drive in man strives. Divine grace assists

in the achievement of the goal. This concept intermingles metaphysical and biblical thinking. Medieval philosophy assumed man's nature to be endowed by the supernatural God with an inner striving toward the "*summum bonum*," which is transcendental; the Bible, on the other hand, it was conceded, proclaims as truth that man can not by his own strength, but by the aid of the grace of God, attain to the goal of salvation. The medieval view then offered a compromise: since the transcendently endowed nature of man is not wholly sufficient, supernatural, infused grace comes to its help and raises it to its own elevated realm.

This view argues that by nature man strives for God; therefore he merits and deserves salvation by the assistance of grace. For, according to Old Testament legalism, idealistic metaphysics, and salvation by the law, man merits salvation because with the help of grace he has accomplished the claim of the Law, and therewith he deserves mercy at the hands of God. Whether the believer in medieval thinking seeks access to God by way of the law or by way of idealistic, natural striving, the manner of achievement is identical. Both ways effectively retain the need of the incarnation of Christ and His atonement for the sinner by means of the doctrine of satisfaction.

Since the atoning suffering of Christ won an objective satisfaction before God, the sacraments, drawing upon that satisfaction, can infuse grace. Grace, the supernatural power granted by the sacrament, lifts the believer to its supernatural plane, where by the help of grace he can ascend on the ladder of merit toward the distant goal which is the eternal contemplation or enjoyment of God. Thus God is in essence the far away goal for the ideal striving of man, and He remains that in the doctrine of grace, in the doctrine of incarnation, in the doctrine of the sacraments. By the teaching of objective satisfaction the redemptive work of Christ is relegated into the historic distance. Man's present relation to the historic Christ is in the main in Scholasticism and in the Middle Ages assigned to the status of seeking to achieve grace by means of the imitation of Christ. And the Holy Spirit dwells in metaphysical transcendence, the far removed fount and cause of grace.

In Luther's exegesis of grace, the Holy Spirit is present in the believer in His actual divinity. Grace is not one momentary operation, but a continual and perpetual spiritual exercise and preservation under which we are acted upon and carried along by the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is never idle in the godly, but is always working something pertaining to the kingdom of God; to the end that in whatever we do we might be of a happy mind and know that under grace all things we do, even our eating and drinking, and all our employment, pleases God. "That is the true spiritual, Christian freedom, which sets the heart free from all sin."²⁰⁹ For "as long as sin is and remains, there is no freedom. If I fail to leave off sinning . . . I shall aspire in vain that I be a lord and God's own and free. . . . For the first freedom is that from sin."²¹⁰

Sanctification is not a constant, static possession. For, it is true that no Christian has sin, and yet it is just as true that every Christian sins, and as long as he lives there is sinfulness in him as well as freedom from sin. "This life is not piety, but increase in devoutness; not health, but improvement in health; not being, but becoming; not rest, but exercise."²¹¹ In grace the Christian possesses God's mercy, his is the gift of the Holy Spirit in Christ, he is illumined with the Spirit and increases in the true knowledge of God and the will to the good from day to day. But by his own work or strength he can not preserve these gifts, and he falls when God forsakes him and takes away His Holy Spirit.

Luther looked upon the Christian life as a continuous crisis. The existence and continuation of his "faith and therewith of his person" is at stake in each crisis, that is, the continuance and maintenance of the believer in him. In each crisis the prime requisite is the preservation of faith through faith. This involves the assurance of forgiveness of sin, therefore consciousness of sin and contrition, that is, repentance. Oracular confession, the actual speaking, as Luther came to see, is not at all an essential part of penitence, not at all necessary or commanded. "The true teaching . . . concerning Christian penitence is composed and encompassed in two parts, namely, first, remorse and earnest alarm on account of sin, and second, faith in forgiveness for Christ's sake."²¹² True Christian contrition exceeds the actual sin, is perpetual and con-

tinues throughout life. For sin continues in the flesh and resists the Holy Spirit. The sinner does not always sufficiently feel and sense his calamitous state; for if he did, he would at once flee "to the deliverer from all evil, this true and veritable Hercules."²¹³ To be justified before God, the transgressor must confess himself guilty in utter humility. He must know and feel terror on account of sin. "That is true contrition that I believe the Word of God, which points out and accuses me a condemned sinner before God; that my heart is affrighted because I have disobeyed my God."²¹⁴ This is the first part of penitence, as Luther states it.

It is of the other part that "I do not despair, but am led to Christ to seek grace and succor from Him, and firmly believe that I shall find."²¹⁴ To believe is "to trust in God and therefore venture to act with Him."²¹⁵ This venture is a firm faith in Christ despite the knowledge of personal imperfection and sinfulness. It is a clinging to God even though I know that "all that I do, act, speak, and think is still [in itself] of death and damnation";²¹⁶ "for it is the most mortal of sins not to believe oneself guilty."²¹⁷ For only in humility and by assumption of guilt is the true faith of penitence possible. A contrite heart and a repentant spirit overcome selfishness and pride which estrange from God. But in humility and self-condemnation we glorify God.

Constancy in penitence and faith, a continuous crisis and recurring decision for or against God constitutes the very existence of the Christian person. The significance of his whole life rests upon the birth of hatred of sin out of love for the good, out of love of God, out of love of the neighbor. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," but not as you love your selfish self. Paradoxically the self-realization of the Christian person is the awareness that the only existence possible to him is continuous love of the self in so far as this "self-love" is identical with the bold spirit of faith in penitence: that is, his existence depends entirely upon love of righteousness which is God. Luther's "love of self" beholds the self "with the eyes of God," wholly surrendered to the will of God in Christ and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Thus, as Luther understood it, this "self-love" is nothing other than the love of the Christian person for the in-dwelling Christ—the love of God! Love your neighbor as you love the indwelling

Christ in the sanctified self, in the neighbor! Behold Christ in the neighbor!

Grace directs, maintains, and increases spiritual activity in the believing heart. According to Luther's analysis of baptism, "God desires to give to us . . . His majesty, light, and strength, and Himself together with everything He has and is capable of . . . in that as Holy Spirit He enlightens us with His fervor . . . so that we perceive and feel Him . . . present as the pure vitality of the Son of God and the flame and energy of the Holy Spirit . . . while the Father quickens us through His light and splendor; thus . . . is carried on one divine work . . . of divine majesty, which is our redemption and eternal salvation."²¹⁸ "Through it He wishes daily to sweep out and finally to exterminate what is left of sin."²¹⁹ Redemption of the self is not annihilation of the self, it is the transfiguration of the self, which, once egoistic, is now vanquished and transmuted into a life dedicated in creative love of God and man. Grace at work in the redemption of the individual Christian re-enacts the dominant plan and design fundamental in the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. For the Christian life must be a constant baptism and the fulfillment of its sacramental obligation: death and resurrection, the mortification of the flesh and the vivification of the Spirit within us. It must be the "*stirb und werde*" of Goethe: crucifixion of the selfish self that it be transformed into a spiritual self. It is Luther's conception that radical, original evil, "the hydra-headed serpent," "the monstrous dragon with whom we battle unto death," "Cerberus the untamable," "unconquerable Antaeus," "Adam's original sin and its never wholly subdued will, the will to self,"²²⁰ can be overcome only by the free will under grace. This requires surrender to the will of God.

Tribulation and Triumph in Grace

The process and effectuation of a complete yielding implies suffering according to Luther, suffering that issues from the fact that man is still a sinner. The idea of struggle, of glorious victory and complete conquest of all hostile powers, finds its supreme example in the objective existence and work of Christ. In Christ the Lord of Creation is revealed without revealing His mystery.

Though concealed and in disguise, His divine majesty dwells in the lowliness of the child in the manger. He who is exalted above all heavens “is born of the Virgin Mary, suffered . . . is crucified dead, and buried”; but this state of humiliation is in truth a state of exaltation, for, having been made alive in His grave, He proclaims His victory over His enemies, death, devil, and hell. He rose from the grave and rules and fills all things with divine power and majesty. And the purpose of this Gospel of grace in Christ is to seek out the sinner, precisely the sinner, so that he may be made His own.

Not only is Christ the manifestation of God, and God Himself; not only does His passion signify redemption from devil, death, and sin, but it is to serve as an example in this that we are not merely to believe in the crucified Christ, we are to be crucified with Him, to suffer with Him, to be resurrected with Him, if we are to become like Him. And, Luther expounds, to “become like Him,” “to believe in Him” implies bearing the cross. “Does not the Holy Spirit forsake us at times”²²¹ in order that Satan may do his worst, that he may shake and shatter the trust and faith in us through “scruples and doubts of conscience,” that he may even endeavor to expunge this trust and faith? For the devil is an “adventurous artificer and a clever master, who can turn sheer righteousness into appalling sin.”²²² Indeed, his mightiest instrument toward suffering and despair is wrong and baneful thinking. “He often assails me so mightily and attacks me so furiously with such oppressive and melancholy thoughts, that I am no longer mindful of my dear Lord Christ, and indeed behold Him to be other than He is. In short, there is none who [because of Satan] is not often and repeatedly bewitched by false, erroneous thoughts and fancies, that is, who does not at times have thoughts and opinions concerning God, Christ, faith . . . that are other than they ought to be.”²²³ Satan’s “fiery, amorous darts” wherewith he plagues the Christian, are good and useful to strengthen faith, to confirm the Word more surely in us. Neither despair nor harm can overtake us; for Christ in us maintains his position and forever remains the master over unbelief, doubt, and despair.

Is not our descent into hell or Sheol²²⁴ identical with the crushing, dumb despair before God’s wrath and our fear and trembling

before the extremity of death? This question Luther answers in other questions and in exposition: Is not this being at times forsaken of the Holy Spirit simply one of the most trenchant forms of practicing faith, so that the Christian may believe this too, that even from the mortal sin of unbelief a return to faith is possible? Are we not purged thereby, and is not each such tribulation another birth, in which the "new man" is born, and the "old man" dies? Does not the Christian heart celebrate its true Sabbath in its victory over "old Adam" in the sanctification of all "thoughts and members" of the total man, a Sabbath to be kept every day and in all daily living?²²⁵ Temptation impels faith to struggle and to renewed strength, and directs it to that "surrender to God's will even unto hell and eternal death"²²⁶ wherein is found "election unto salvation." In moments of temptation we are forsaken of God so that we may be strengthened. The governing principle is love, which draws wrath and the world of anger with its might into the service of salvation. This uttermost tribulation must rebound to our good, if we remain in faith; for he, who believes loves God, and gladly suffers the enthrallment of his will to God's; and, surrendered to God, he can not remain in hell, that is, outside God.

The way of crucifixion of the selfish will is the way of moments identical with hell, that is, moments devoid of faith and hope. "Hell, purgatory, and heaven are so to speak as distinct from one another as are total despair, near-despair, and assurance,"²²⁷ Luther wrote 1517 in Thesis 16. The will must conform to the will of God to the point of "*resignatio ad infernum*." It must experience the torment of death and hell, which obliterates all knowledge and love of God, all grace and hope. Sin and guilt give rise to this inner conflict, this struggle with Satan, with God Himself and all His works, this crisis of being and not-being. The anguished soul is provoked to blasphemy, calls down destruction upon the "Source of all life" and implores that God be other than He is, that there be no God. This is the spiritual state of the sinner in the presence of God, the omnipotent, eternal, and holy Judge.

But God does not desire the death of the sinner. By means of the cross, by means of the work of wrath and estrangement from Him, He prepares the sinner for His love and peace. There must

be death before He can resurrect to life. If the sinner is to come to Him in faith, hope, and love, he must first walk into darkness, he must in inner tribulation suffer the pangs of hell, be tempted to deny God's very being. He must be reduced to disdain and hatred of the self in recognition of its nothingness. It is the way of God, that He be found in suffering.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered." These are the words of St. Paul in Romans 8: 26. Luther's exegesis of this passage explains that true love of God in us is created by the Holy Spirit. In the midst of the bitterness and the dread of the wrath of God and fear of hell, in the midst of temptations seducing to sacrilege, scoffing, and defiant denial of God, man does not know what he should pray or how he ought to pray. In the midst of his hatred, his execration upon death and hell and very God Himself the sinner is not capable of that trust and love of God which groans for and implores His help. Man himself is lost, knows no help either within or without. Then the Holy Spirit, actually present within, is made our Helper and our Comforter: it is He who "with groanings that can not be uttered" intercedes in us and for us, it is He who from the beginning wrought in the sinner the inner conflict and the hatred of self. It is God, who initiates and does all things in this unutterable act of love. By means of the groanings of the Holy Spirit in and for the sinner the "old man" is crucified in the descent into the hell of inner tribulation and the selfish will is transformed into a will made like unto the will of God. Thus conformed to His will, the will is yielded to Him and willing to submit to hell and eternal death, if it be His will. Such a one, having grace in the Holy Spirit, can not possibly go to hell, Luther declares, for He is one with God, conformed to Christ, one in fellowship with Christ in the Holy Spirit. Harmony with the will of God is no longer hell-fire, but life and salvation.

For Luther God is remote from the sinner when in His wrath He turns from him, forsakes him, and thus delivers him over to hell and death. He is not remote in the metaphysical sense of the *First Cause*, nor is He propitiated by the sinner's idealistic endea-

vor toward His favor. Luther experienced the remoteness of God in the sense of the Bible: He alone can and does initiate, He alone can and did establish communion with man in Christ. God is remote in His judgment and wrath, in His hiddenness and "otherness," He is present in the heart in His very reality in Christ, the Redeemer and Mediator.

In his own crisis of being or not-being before God, Luther came to know the God of grace, actually and personally present within. In contrast to the *caritas*-idealism of the Middle Ages, which assumed that man's higher self owns a particular affinity to God, Luther found that precisely in the spiritual and religious death of the self, in the besetting and terrifying accusations and assailments of God and all creatures upon his conscience, in the very paralysis of all idealistic striving, in the moments of unequivocal damnation and annihilation of the wilful self God is present by His Spirit, infusing His grace while sending forth groanings no man could utter. That is Luther's interpretation of Romans 8: 26. In this realistic concept of God there is no struggle toward a remote goal by the aid of grace, but grace is the presence of God Himself, is eternal salvation. Salvation is not complete, but it is certain.

The real presence of God in His grace signifies the end of the Law and the coming of the Gospel. The death and resurrection of Christ are for Luther not only an objective satisfaction offered once and for all time to the Father, they are a present reality in the act of grace, in the inner suffering and conflict transforming the will's self-centeredness to conformity to Christ. In the midst of trial and tribulation none other than God Himself in person contends in the battle for us. In inner battle is man raised from the dead. The Holy Spirit Himself acts on behalf of the believer's redemption and sanctification. Whereas the unregenerate one was formerly flesh in the whole man, because he was spiritually dead, that is, outside God, now, within and under the presence of God, the whole man is spirit.

In sum, in the purging fires of inner conflict between the will to self and the awareness of God's wrath, the love of God instils self-condemnation, self-hatred. This struggle denotes suffering which parallels the suffering, cross, and death of Christ.

The rescue of the believer from the hell and death of inner tribulation conforms to Christ in His resurrection. The love and faith infused by the Holy Spirit constitute, according to Luther, a real relation to the living and present Christ, to the actually present, crucified, and risen Christ. Not as in the piety of the Middle Ages is the believer himself active and struggling to realize the ideal which Christ represents. In Luther's conception of conformity to Christ, the believer, rejoicing in the living and acting Christ within, surrenders to Him in complete passivity in the knowledge that his salvation is in Christ, not in himself. The "yoke of Christ" is gentle and easy to bear, and His peace makes sweet and instils joyous willingness to bear all things. The "supreme, best, and greatest pledge of the Christian is to annihilate sin and become holy by the work and grace of God, to whom he surrenders and yields as does clay to the potter."²²⁸

Man falls, suffers despair, is crushed in order that he be exalted. "That is the manner of God with Moses, with every saint . . . that He destroys him utterly before He exalts him, He shatters before He builds; He abases before He raises us; He annihilates before He quickens."²²⁹ Moses "inveighs against his forbears . . . depicts them as scoundrels. And yet they were the people of God and the ancestors of Christ . . . These things are written in admonition . . . Christ had to come because of sin . . . these infamous stories show forth God's miracle also toward sin."²³⁰

Luther's translation of Psalm 118: 21 made in 1530 reads: "I thank Thee that Thou humblest me and helpst me." Here he finds the whole gamut of human experience, reaching from the void of despair, paralysis, and yearning hope, to the certainty of the Father's goodness, munificence, and forgiveness. Here are doubt, restlessness, woe, strife, distress, and longing for peace. However, suffering and agony are but a test to open the flood-gates of jubilation, of endless, inexhaustible springs of delight welling forth the reconciliation of heaven and earth through the power of faith and love. The hidden, holy God and the revealed Creator and heavenly Father are united, the finite is shown capable of receiving the infinite. The wonder of Him Inexplicable and the adoration of Him Present sound the deeps

of religious absorption and the heights of clarified vision. Dejection accompanies the surrender to the things of the world, and elevation the abandonment and transfiguration of this same world; and completeness is had in the immersion in the Spirit. It is only the finite that suffers; the infinite lies stretched in infinite repose and releases the imprisoned splendor in man. The psalmist presents this paradox of faith, of the Christian, of life: its tragedy, its sublimity, its humility, its inadequacy, lack, and shame; the enigma and ambiguity it is, its exaltation and triumph. It is the way of mortal man — his way through the world, beset with error, the way of guilt, yet the way to God and salvation. In the words of the psalm Luther sees the union of the contrast that constitutes the essence of life, the son of man become the son of God. "I thank Thee that Thou humblest me and helpest me."

And Luther's further exegesis: "This is so gladsome a verse that we romp and sing in all mirth and delight: are you not a wondrous, dear God ruling us so wondrously and tenderly! You extol us in that you humble us. You make us to be righteous, in that you make of us transgressors. You turn us to heaven when you cast us into hell. You grant us victory when you let us be defeated. You quicken our hearts in that you destroy us. You comfort us while you make us to mourn. You gladden us as you send us wailing; you let us sing while you cause us to weep. You make us strong when we suffer affliction. You impart wisdom when you let us play the fool. You bestow riches while you inflict poverty. You make lords of us in that you let us serve. And countless marvels more . . . are poured out in profusion and compressed in this short verse."²³¹

In all truth, "whoever does not know Christ does not know God who is hidden in suffering."²³² For true knowledge of God repose in the humility of the cross. The substance of God made known in part in the glory and majesty of His creation, is still hidden. None can seek out His nature, however prolonged the tribulation of heart and soul, except he approach Him through Christ. In Him, in the cross, is the light of the Word and salvation. In the bondage of the will to Him, through grace, is the Christian made free.

Clearly, Luther's affliction was not of the body, nor even that of intellectual doubt arising from the contrast between the new world about him and the world as conceived of in the Bible. His affliction lay deeper. He asked the "existential" question, whether he, the whole man, could appear before God. Upon the answer depended his existence. For he was convinced that life for him as a man was impossible if he were not accepted of God in his totality. Luther faced this question in the interpretation and meaning of the Law, "the righteousness of God." If there were no answer, he knew, he could not live. With the revelation that in Christ righteousness is transformed into love he was born anew.

After fifteen hundred years of Christian faith and confession, the Roman Church offered and recommended a tested, intensive exercise of penance as a means to grace and peace. Though Luther voluntarily entered upon the most exacting monastic asceticism and exhausted the subtleties of the strict discipline of scholastic dialectic, his conscience knew no peace. No efforts of psychology can categorize the tribulations of the religious revolution in Luther's conscience. His trials of faith were wholly unrelated to any nervous condition or schizophrenia. His besetting afflictions arose rather from the fact that in his creaturehood his strong will revolted against the command of unconditional subjection to the anger and condemnation of God, the Giver of Law and the Judge. How fatuous was all ascetic practice, all self-inflicted flagellation, all facility in the high art of scholastic syllogism in the face of the unfulfillable demand that with all his heart he love this God who punishes, who visits the iniquity of the father upon the children unto the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him! How could he, monk though he be, trust or love such a God?

As a student and as a teacher of theology Luther had to come to grips with Occamism, which far more sharply than the theology of Thomas Aquinas or High Scholasticism exposed the antithesis inherent in the religious dogma as practiced by the Church: since the human will is endowed with unlimited capability, it is charged with the duty of deciding for the good and against evil. Responsible for his actions, man is thus also made

responsible for achieving worthiness before God and His grace by his own deserts and merit. However, he has no assurance whatever that his ethical efforts will finally be accepted. For is not God a jealous God, zealous in the arbitrariness of His will, unfathomed by man's reason? Does He not accept some and reject others? No one appeared to have questioned this doctrine nor been troubled by it.

In continued struggle and torment Luther engaged upon the search for the true God of grace until he arrived at the deepened and enriched conception of the Christian Gospel that the righteousness of God through Christ justifies the sinner. Out of his own inward experience a new meaning was given to this basic Christian tenet in that Luther radically denied the freedom of man's will and his ethical autonomy on the one hand, and on the other emphatically intensified, heightened, and increased man's ethical-religious responsibility. The paradox at the core of this religious experience is in fact a truth in the realm of the Absolute: the individual's complete and voluntary surrender to the will of God does not lead to despair, nor to self-annihilation, but quite to the contrary establishes the most dignified, most felicitous assurance of self: that freedom of the Christian man which saves from all anxiety here and beyond and is the foundation for all heroic affirmation of life.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH IN CHRIST

Augustinian and scholastic doctrine understood sin from the point of view of Neo-Platonism. This regarded man's sinful lower nature as being gradually spiritualized with the help of infused grace. Here the degree of spiritualization achieved in the process of justification depended upon the quantity of merit and good works the sinner could offer on his own behalf. Luther, however, discovered that this "higher" or "spiritual" component in man, made the goal of aspiration in the scholastic doctrine of grace, is often actually the seat of sin. All too frequently he had found himself on the brink of despair because neither by cajoling nor by mortifying his flesh could he induce grace to blend with his own nature. His selfish will still persisted, obstinate and in-

eradicable, no matter how pious his works, how continuous his orisons, how prolonged his fasting, how merciless his self-castigation. The infusion of grace, as taught him by the Church, proved inefficacious. It was clear, he himself could not help toward attainment of inner righteousness, he could not lay claim to God's grace. Grace and peace were his, only when he grasped that the righteousness of God is Christ Himself.

Luther now knew that by faith in the Word of God and His promises the believer is seized by divine grace made his in Christ, and wrought in him by the Holy Spirit. Reconciliation between God and man is effected and remission of sins conferred by grace. The sinner is declared righteous before God in that righteousness which is his in Christ. It is an alien righteousness, for it is won by Christ and not by the believer. By virtue of the imputation of Christ's alien righteousness the believer is free from the power of the Law. Forgiveness of sin, granted together with the righteousness of Christ, establishes a state of grace within, and therewith salvation. Grace, which is God's unmerited love and favor in Christ, is bestowed upon the believer in his totality, and this constitutes justification. In reality justification is the infusion of grace together with the gift of Christ through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works an inner righteousness by the attribution of the alien righteousness of Christ. Righteousness imputed to us and the reception of the Holy Ghost are one and the same thing.

Salvation of the sinner depends entirely upon the alien righteousness of Christ. It alone establishes the necessary reconciliation between God and man. By His incarnation and obedience unto death Christ offered expiation for our sins and propitiated the wrath of God. He met the demands of the retributive justice of God. By fulfilling the Law He furnished the ransom. The Judge is no longer forced to execute the punishment justly due for our guilt. Christ took upon Himself the penalties of our transgressions. He delivered us from the tyranny and all consequences of sin. By His atonement He restored the relation of God to man which sin had disrupted. By His redemptive work Christ made His righteousness our own.

This alien righteousness is God-given; it is a living reality, the

living Christ Himself, present through the Holy Spirit. In and with this righteousness of Christ God gives Himself to us completely with all He is and has. And in giving Himself He justifies us. In His death Christ won forgiveness of sin for us, His death is the "perfect sufficiency" demanded by the justice of God. His resurrection is the sacrament of our righteousness and is made our own, if we believe in it. Thus, it is Luther's position that the objective suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ does and must become our very own, must live in us, if God is to effect our justification.

This righteousness is not a quality of God, according to Luther, but is the gift of His love for us through Christ, made ours by faith alone. God who creates and maintains life also ordains the manner of His relation to us: He gives Himself, His own righteousness, wisdom, and love. And these lie outside any affinity to Him within us. For "the righteousness of faith is beyond the realm of man."²³³ It is His will to save us not through earth-born righteousness, but through that of His Son.

Single acts and performance achieved a quality called righteousness by Aristotle. But "righteousness by faith" is beyond man's power to understand and is not merited by deeds and accomplishments. It is a living faith in Christ, created by God. By His Holy Spirit God works in us when "our planning and our performance are at rest, when we have been made wholly passive in respect to God."²³⁴ For Luther differentiates carefully when he insists that righteousness by faith is of the Gospel and is not a righteousness of the Law. A legal righteousness claims a right before God; by it we offer our own merit, good desert, religion, morality, and measure according to quantity and ideal quality. Our righteousness in faith is an evangelical righteousness—a gift of God to us. Our alien righteousness is God-given and is therefore the only righteousness God recognizes. It is ours when we accept Christ as a gift. In it we are made the children of God, and in Christ we stand superior to all Law.

Though the Law is fulfilled and abrogated as a pattern of life, it remains as a regulative, fundamental, and controlling rule and standard. It is of the Spirit and divine. Its content is eternal. The Gospel transforms us "from enemies into friends of the Law."²³⁵

Since Christ set us free from the Law we "love" it. We obey it in His strength, freely, joyously, and no longer as trembling slaves.

Justification, then, is forgiveness of sin, freedom from the tyranny of the Law. It is a decree and a deed of God. His decree is objectivized in the work of Christ, which makes possible God's grace toward man. In faith the believer is justified and sanctified. Justification and sanctification are one inseparable act of God; the Holy Spirit wrests the sinner from the dominion of Satan, conducts him to Christ and preserves him in faith. Justification is thus given to us, imputed to us by Him who is active and effective in it. The Father attributes Christ's righteousness to us, makes the living Christ active in us, so that His righteousness becomes our life. He declares Christ in us to be our righteousness, our justification, our forgiveness of sin.

The actual union of Christ and the believer is necessary, for only thus can His righteousness be truly credited to the believer, and the believer's sins laid to the charge of Christ. In one concrete expression faith lays hold of the real presence of Christ as well as the attribution of His righteousness. Faith which justifies is a complete trust in God, in Christ. It is the conviction, in Luther's words, that God is gracious to us and remits our sin, "that He is my God."

Righteousness before God is neither infused grace nor faith itself as a living power in the heart of man. Christ alone, apprehended in faith, is our righteousness and our salvation. Christ Himself, the living, risen, personal Christ, invisible, incomprehensible, He who dwells in us by faith, is our righteousness. Faith in Christ has in Luther the particular meaning that by the Holy Spirit grace and the gift, which is Christ, are received as one. The believer, united with Christ in faith, possesses in Him both His grace, which is God's mercy toward us revealed in the self-sacrifice of Christ for us, and the gift, which is Christ Himself in His righteousness. In justifying faith Christ dwells and rules within us. God gives Himself, inseparable, complete, with all He is and has! That, and nothing less, is Luther's meaning of the alien righteousness in faith.

Faith and its continuance belong to God. Faith, His gift, depends constantly upon His grace. Grace can be had only by faith

in Christ. Faith and grace are interdependent. Outside grace faith becomes a part of our unregenerate self, and thus it is subject to the severest judgment of God. Without faith in the redeeming reality of Christ grace is but an abstract idea, a universal truth, the acceptance of which will always be a work of the Law. For Luther grace and faith, bestowed by God, meet in Christ. God creates faith in us as His gift when Christ is accepted as a gift from Him. There is no other way. Faith lives completely and alone by the real presence of Christ. The measure of Christ's real presence is the measure of actual faith.

Luther's exegesis further makes clear that God justifies him alone who no longer presumes to come to Him by way of the Law and its system of merit. God justifies him who in despair condemns the self and has set out upon the path of true "*imitatio Christi*," which is the way of the cross and suffering, the way of total and joyous dependence upon Christ. He who is certain his salvation is in Christ is His follower, and none other. It is all the work of God from the beginning to the end, and the fruit of His action.

Why does faith in the redeeming Christ justify? Luther answers that in faith we accord supreme glory unto God. Faith fulfills the First Commandment. We know Christ in that we receive His glory and righteousness as our own. And when we know that the Father has attributed the righteousness of the Son—which is the Father's—to us, then do we know the Father. For justification by faith is pure, divine grace on the part of the Father, and to know that is to glorify Him.²³⁶ Only when His Son dwells within the heart in faith, does the Father look upon us with favor. Yet, however much Luther emphasized the indwelling Christ, and however important this is for the new, inward, ethical, religious life of the believer, it is always the objective Christ, whose objective redemptive work is imputed to the believer, in whom the believer so completely trusts.

No merit, no work makes acceptable before God. Works, as Luther says, can neither believe nor fear; but man, the individual, the person fears and believes—and suffers. Suffering alone prepares for justification; not in the sense that it is our own preparation, for we can do nothing, but it is God's preparation in us.

Suffering, not works, stands at the beginning of justification. The faith which adheres to the alien righteousness of Christ rests upon true penitence. Upon repentance called forth by the Law. This suffering on account of sin is the work of the Holy Spirit, it is His "groanings" within the heart, a complete turning away from sin. It is contrition, sorrow for sin as against God's holiness and love.

However, penitence does not effect forgiveness of sin in Luther's theology, nor is it the cause of justification. Penitence is the work of Him who wrote His Law upon tablets of stone. Not the Comforter, not the gift, but the Judge, the "*deus nudus*" is active here. The Holy Spirit seizes him whom He would justify, bruises and crushes him so that he believes to have lost himself and God. This same Holy Spirit who is the Judge in the Law, who creates the bruised heart, the penitence within us is He who leads to the Gospel, to Christ, and justifies us by faith.

Luther's doctrine of justification by faith is possible only because it builds upon a radical self-condemnation which ruthlessly eradicates every shred of suggestion assuming a gradual transition from the natural to the supernatural estate in a process of perfectibility as taught in scholastic theology. For Luther, justification by faith is wholly the work of God. It excludes every human activity or merit. It is a total regeneration, all of man is reborn through faith in the redemption won by Christ. And forgiveness of sin is most assuredly his, even though faith were as small as a mustard seed. Let the heart but yearn for grace and harbor a spark of divine faith. By the help of the Holy Spirit the believing heart appropriates the heavenly treasure whether or not it feels its faith as it should. It is necessary only that the heart sigh for God's grace. God esteems such sighing and minutest spark of faith as complete faith.

On the other hand, Luther's exegesis of justification by faith sets forth that the believer is justified wholly only after death, in eternity in the presence of God. For though the believer is justified in this life, sin still remains. "All of life is a span of time in which we desire righteousness, in which however we never have it completely. That is reserved for eternal life."²³⁷ In faith we are justified, in the sinful self we are sinners. The righteousness of

Christ, to which faith clings, is attributed to the total man and covers the totality of sin—but it does not destroy the remaining sin as a reality. As long as we are in Christ original sin can not harm us. It remains, but it is not imputed to us. During our pilgrimage here, complete and total justification is ours in Christ, for Christ Himself frees us from sin. Set free from the dominion of God's judgment, we dwell in the dominion of His grace, for by the act of justification, we are accounted as righteous in faith for the sake of Him in whom we believe.

However, Christ did not come to abrogate the Law, but to fulfill it and to establish it as our rule and authoritative standard. Since the Law is not fulfilled in the sinner in this life, it still accuses and threatens with the wrath of God. In justification war is declared upon the remaining, original sin, always present in mortal man. Only in the resurrection to eternal life will sin be completely exterminated. Therefore the sinner and believer—in one—enjoys a double righteousness. The alien righteousness ascribed to us in the act of justification through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ is perfect and total. However, the righteousness active within us through the Holy Spirit, in whose strength we condemn sin out of love of the good, is imperfect.

Therefore, in Luther's exegesis, our rebirth in the Holy Spirit, our seeking refuge in Christ signifies engagement in constant struggle against sin, an increase in purging and expulsion of sin. For though we are spirit by faith in Christ, we are flesh by virtue of our wilful self. Man is flesh in his totality. It is not a question here of a struggle between a "high" and "low" component in man's nature, but between the total selfish self and the Holy Spirit. Therefore the two passages from I John, whose contradiction is patent, are both true: The one, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he can not sin, because he is born of God." I John 3: 9. And the other, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." I John 1: 8. As long as life endures, the Holy Spirit within is active in battle against the total wilful self.

This is the work of sanctification carried on by the Holy Spirit. It has to do with the total sinner, with total man. For in Luther's view man is not a sum of individual actions and outward perform-

ance, but a whole, made and created a total person by God. And when in the process of sanctification, we, as total sinners, are brought by the Holy Spirit into the kingdom of Christ, the power of sin is destroyed, sin is expelled. However, the forcible ejection of sin implies a series of actions and changes. Luther's *Small Catechism* explains that expulsion of sin means that the Spirit daily works penitence through the Law, and faith through the Gospel. That requires that the daily repetition of the death and resurrection of Christ be mediated in us by the Holy Spirit. Obviously Luther does not think of this as an evolution in which our presumed religious and moral strength overcomes our baser nature.

Justification, which is forgiveness of sin, and sanctification, which is expulsion of sin, altogether the work of the Holy Spirit, are an inseparable unity. They can not be sundered, for the Spirit is one. In the Holy Spirit the work of sanctification transforms Christian life into a becoming, growth, development, transition, progress. All of life is repentance. Luther does not understand this as asceticism, but as struggle, as a continual re-creation of the person, as a life devised by God in suffering for sin and triumph over sin.

Christian life, as seen by Luther, is not static, nor is it quietistic. The love of God within neither wearies nor does it remain idle. Crucifixion of the flesh, death, and resurrection to life, conquest and surrender continue in rhythmical mobility in the believer, that "Christ may dwell within." For God's righteousness, active in the heart, does not cease: "This life is none other than a continuous hatred of the old self, and a seeking and yearning for life in the new self."²³⁸ Life is a continual seeking, a having and not-having, faith and hope. It is a prayer for forgiveness of sin, growth in the Holy Spirit and in grace. This is Luther's interpretation of a sanctified life.

It is the reality of a "hidden," spiritual relation to God, and therewith the penetration from that which appears to that which is. "Whosoever has not yet forsaken all praise of men and has not yet suffered defamation, censure, and persecution in his works, has not even touched perfect righteousness."²³⁹ For God leads us to the cross. In "hiddenness," in contrast He establishes His kingdom in us: through death He leads to life; through hatred of self

to the love of God; through suffering to His glory; through sin to righteousness; through weakness to strength. In judgment and grace, in destruction and quickening the Holy Spirit creates in us a new mind, new thoughts, a new temper, a God-pleasing disposition, a pure heart, and endows with new strength and a new life. In Christ the believer is righteous and holy; in Him he has all things. And his life is pure joy, for it is built on a certain trust in God. It is Luther's proud conviction that he in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells acts rightly without being aware of it. Jubilantly he proclaims that God Himself, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are present in us and we thus partake (II Peter 1: 4) of the divine nature of God.

In this manner the Holy Spirit sanctifies the total man and keeps him in true faith. Thus does He reveal to us that the heart of God is pure love. Then is life transformed: God is now where formerly there was nothing. Life is a continuous beginning, a continuous direction toward God and His activity within. The believer possesses in faith; he overcomes in submission to God. For the goal of justification, of sanctification is: conformity with the will of God, praise and thanksgiving unto Him. In conformity with His will God is loved for His own sake, with the pure, strong, bitter love which is stronger than death.²⁴⁰ This is the true salvation, the true justification and sanctification, that we desire His glory, that we confidently affirm His will in every situation, and desire nothing for ourselves.

None rejoiced more exuberantly in the consciousness of God revealed in Christ, in having found the way to the "dear Father," than did Luther. For justified in faith, his sins forgiven, divine grace active within the Holy Spirit, certain of the love of God and His salvation, his conscience was at peace. Though the immutable, fathomless, majestic God was still hidden, he "had" the God of mercy and love. In his conscience, in his consciousness he called his own, what none could take from him. God Himself, in His actuality and reality, was his, dwelt within. And he experienced, felt, and knew that before God he was justified. He knew that the purpose of justification by faith beyond forgiveness of sin is the regeneration, rebirth, renewal of man.

And this further new truth was revealed to him, namely, that

in the strength of the faith and the love wrought in us by the Holy Spirit in our justification before God, we are made the instruments, co-workers, vessels, and sons of God.²⁴¹ Unto His glory does He fulfill His work in us in so far as we yield to Him in faith. "All are instruments of God, who effects all in all."²⁴² We are led into the depths by Him and freed of all ownness, that through us His power may become effective in this world. By justification in faith a new, the "real" world is revealed to us. God is at work in it and we are to work with Him. And Luther's faith confidently maintains that no evil can come nigh unto us in our surrendered will to God, in so far as He wills whatever befalls us.²⁴³

The activity of faith as considered by Luther here is not to be understood as a bare, abstract, or inactive quality, also not as a single momentary stirring, but as "*substantia*." This means that the actually active Holy Spirit within is the "real," present, divine source of all good, that the believer experiences a union with God in faith. The reborn life, the love of God and neighbor, flows directly from faith in the knowledge of communion with God. The fundamental drive is love of God. This love knows but one need: to fulfill His will in pure thanksgiving.

Faith and the Holy Spirit within bring forth good works, unforced, indeed, spontaneously and unrequested. As a good tree brings forth fruit and can not abstain therefrom, thus, where there is faith, good works grow without effort. Not because of promise of reward, not because of any obligation to us on the part of God, but simply because the love of God is now the all-inclusive compulsion of our nature, and good works must follow, even as the sun shines because it is thus made. God is loved not because of His gifts and beneficence, but as God who is God in His invisible, incomprehensible Being. Furthermore, Luther found legalistic terms no longer suitable, such as, the believer *shall*, *must* do good works, for even as one does not command the sun to give forth light or the tree to bear fruit, even so good works are not performed upon command.

This is the "love with all thy heart" demanded in Deut. 6: 5, that we do the good not out of fear of death or hell, also not because of the promise of heaven, but out of a free spirit, out of joy,

out of love of righteousness. True love is the issue of a good will, it does not seek its own advantage or profit. Love active in a sanctified life, as Luther defines it, desires nothing beyond the name of God, His kingdom and will, and knows no greater joy to ask than this: "Hallowed be Thy name." This love would not want to enter the wide open portals of heaven if it were not the will of God.²⁴⁴ God does not need our works, He takes pleasure in our faith and thankfulness. Justification by faith in Christ thus brings about that we love our neighbor out of love for Him. And whereas the Law teaches what we are to do out of fear and love of God, faith now offers us God's grace that we may be able to translate the Law's demands into joyous and spontaneous activity to the glory of His name.

Eschatology

Though good deeds proceed from love of God and His righteousness, Luther recognized there are Bible passages urging piety for the sake of eternal life. He discusses passages such as Matt. 19: 17: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," or Matt. 6: 20: "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven," and declares that, as good works must "naturally follow faith" without coercion, thus also, without our seeking it, does eternal reward naturally follow the right faith. God gave His promise of eternal life that everyone might know that unending glory inevitably attends active faith, that the believer be not anxious about an assured, blessed life after death, that he cast out all fear and rejoice in the knowledge that it is there for him. It is the "friendly, fatherly will of God," the "loving-kindness of Christ cordially inviting us," offering His solemn pledge that eternal life is ours, not that for its sake we should be pious as if to seek a reward, but that it be an allurement and inducement to piety, to a desire to serve God and praise Him instinctively.

In faith, in penitent struggle and suffering the Christian is to await his future state of perfection; then all sin and uncleanness shall be wiped out, all error shall cease. No longer will there be faith in that life, but fulfillment in love. We shall keep every demand of the Law out of the abundance of an overflowing heart.

We shall not need forgiveness, for we shall be completely holy, free of guilt and blessed in God. Then will the commandments of God be fulfilled as the angels in heaven fulfill them.

Luther believed, though Scriptures offer little elucidation, that they who die in the Lord are blessed saints in eternity from death on. But that is in the hands of the hidden God and not revealed to us. Nor do we know what will be the fate of the heathen. All meaning and solution of the problems pertaining to the end of days, the damnation of the unbelievers, their eternal suffering in anguish of conscience in their separation from God, must be surrendered to the inscrutability of God, to the unconditionality and absoluteness of His will. Here Luther recommends that we keep silence before Him. However, all this recedes before the splendor and glory of light in God which will then be revealed. Let the believer cling to this: we shall see Him face to face, we shall behold Him as He is. Then shall we be clad in righteousness. Then shall we shine as the "dear sun" and be without blemish or infirmity, for we shall be filled with love, the love of God, which is perfect love.

Perfected love of God in us will then replace faith. Earth and heaven will not wear the workaday clothes they now wear, but will be arrayed in "Easter and Pentecost robes." Perfected in Him, God will pass through us, enlighten us and make our bodies translucent, clear, and light as air. We also shall be free from all material needs and disturbances, and in spiritual fulfillment nature and her creatures will be transformed. For all life will then be spiritual. And living spiritually in God, we shall go out into heaven and earth, with sun and moon and all creatures and play with them and take our joy in them. And whatever gladness the heart may seek will be there in abundance. The love of God will be all in all, and wherever He is there must be happiness and delight. Luther's exultation in describing eternal life in "our dear Father" knows no bounds, for words can not encompass nor the mind conceive of such glory and fulfillment.

Luther leaves any questions beyond the testimony of Scriptures unanswered. He does not attempt to say what the tasks of the blessed will be, how they will practice their love of God and

neighbor. But he is certain it will be "the one glory of all glories," for we shall be the children of God. This is salvation by the grace of God through faith in Christ.

Christian Love

Luther defined Christian life wrought by the Holy Spirit here on earth in terms of the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and love. By these virtues the Spirit sanctifies man according to the First Table of the Law, that is, within the sphere of man's relation to God. This relation is established and maintained in faith. It is maintained in and by the unselfish love of God; it perseveres in hope through all inner conflict. The reality of this sanctification of the spirit is made manifest in the sanctification of the body according to the Second Table. That is, faith, hope, and love show themselves as living realities by the fact that they are active toward mankind in the Christian's calling and station. The First and Second Tables belong together. Luther voices the strong conviction that if the sanctification of the soul or spirit of man according to the First Table does not prove itself active in the sanctification of the body according to the Second Table, then nothing has been perceived either of Christ or of the Holy Spirit.

In the sanctification according to the First Table, in inner conflict under the tyranny of the Law, man is despoiled of his own strength and brought to rely upon Christ voluntarily. In the sanctification according to the Second Table, the sinner, despoiled of his own strength, in reliance upon Christ, is used by Him as a tool in the works of love toward his fellow men in the daily pursuit of his calling. This means that in his calling and performance the Christian is urged by the Spirit of God, who is truly present with His all-embracing, saving work in Christ. Thus naturally and normally performed tasks become a part of God's own creative and redemptive work, and are not a part of man's attempt to plead his own righteousness or merit, neither are they to serve his own selfish ends.

The Christian's existence, all his work is lifted out of the isolation of his own selfish religiosity and is drawn by the Spirit into God's service and activity. This life then contains a double motivation: faith compels the believer to renounce his own strength

and to cast himself upon Christ's alien righteousness; love forces him to forsake himself and address his energies to the needs and well-being of his fellow men through his calling. In this manner the life of the Christian is taken out of the realm of Satan and placed in the realm of Christ.

Luther's conception of the love begotten through the act of grace and faith is not the "*caritas ordinata*" of the medieval Church of Rome. He wrote in 1533: "The best among them taught and still teach that works of love give strength and form to faith. They say, '*fides formata*' and '*caritas est forma fidei*' on the basis of St. Paul's words to the Galatians: 'In Christ availeth alone . . . faith which is active through love [King James' version: faith which worketh by love]. As they understand it, faith does not precede works, but works earn grace and salvation. And yet Paul is not concerned here with what faith is or does in its own right nor with what love is or does; he simply subsumes what a whole Christian life ought to be, namely faith and love: faith toward God which seizes Christ and obtains forgiveness of sin without works; after that, love toward the neighbor, this fruit of faith, which proves faith to be genuine . . . active, and vital. He does not assert love to be active, but that faith is active; that faith practices love and makes [love] active, and not love faith, as the Papists reverse it and ascribe everything to love and nothing to faith. St. Paul ascribes everything to faith, for through [faith] comes grace from God . . . faith brings forth and effects love or works."²⁴⁵

Faith is the most potent, most immediate relation between God and man. Faith never yields, does not suffer. Charity or love is often deceived, it trusts in men and is often mistaken. Faith trusts in God and is never wrong. Moreover, calculating love, even if it seeks its own soul's salvation, is not love. Man, as such, "by nature," impulse, instinct, volition, wills himself, but love sprung from faith is the conquest of this self-asserting hostility to God. Man loves only then when he surrenders himself wholly to another with the spontaneity and unpremeditatedness of impulsive will. Complete surrender is at hand only when God is loved "without reason," with a love knowing neither end, purpose, nor design. "God desires that we serve Him gratuitously, voluntarily;

and whoever serves God out of fear of punishment and hell, or out of hope and love of reward . . . does not truly serve Him."²⁴⁶ Love does not deliberate — it loses the selfish self completely. The thought, that man loves the good "because it is the good," is bound to reason and calculation, and does not therefore come into the veriest presence of God. Only he who loves God wholly for His own sake, can understand what God is. "He who shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it." Whosoever would enter the kingdom of God for the sake of eternal bliss is yet far from having it. Only he will attain this reward who does not seek it. "This is beatitude," is a comment on St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, "to desire the will and glory of God in all things and to desire nothing for oneself either here or beyond."²⁴⁷

Faith has to do with God in our hearts and comes to an end in death. Love, the result of faith, has to do with God and all the world "eternally." Faith is active through its instrument, which is love. The instrument itself is impotent, it draws upon faith for its power. Luther holds that faith is the basis, love the effect of justification. Faith makes the person, and the person performs the works of faith, that is, works of love. In themselves works have no value in relation to faith; whatever value is in them is a fruit of grace. "Faith is the master over love, love must yield to faith, not faith to love."²⁴⁸

Faith and the works of love have validity only by the grace of God; therefore works do not effect salvation. Salvation depends entirely upon the will and grace of God, and upon faith, in which God's will to grace is realized. There is no human merit before God; no work as such has merit. The fruit it bears is its own reward. In whatever the Christian does, he glorifies God. In pure disinterest, in thankfulness and joyousness he strives for nothing other than the realization of the glory and will of God, even if there were no heaven and no hell.²⁴⁹ For the kingdom of God is not being prepared, it has been prepared, and the sons of God do not earn the kingdom, but the kingdom wins the sons.

Luther's position in regard to every religious seeking and effort is this: the truly justified, righteous, pious believers know themselves to be sinners, they are always humble and live in a state of contrition until death conducts them to eternal life. All of life

here is a struggle for justification, for freedom from sin and selfishness. Whosoever stops on the way to God, retrogresses; whosoever progresses, forever begins anew. All goodness in us, all good deeds are brought about by God and prove us ever more securely established in His presence. Salvation is ours in faith and hope; but the eternally present power of God, active in us, helps us seek the good, which is God, for His sake.

The spirit of freedom alone begets works of love out of that love of God for which justification is the prerequisite. But the works of the Law proceed from fear and for the sake of reward, outside grace and faith. "They who do not serve God in tormented fear or confused love are made free by the Holy Spirit. For all who serve in fear are constant and firm only as long as fear endures; in truth, they are forced to serve Him reluctantly, in such manner, that they would not serve Him at all if there were no hell or punishment. Likewise, they who serve God from love of reward or gain are also not constant; for if they had no knowledge of reward, or derived no benefit therefrom, they would cease [serving Him]. All these do not know the joy of salvation in God, nor have they a pure heart, nor a right spirit, but admire and love themselves before God. Those however who serve God in a good, right will are firm in His service, may whatsoever come to pass; may whatsoever chances be sweet or sour; for they are made firm and steadfast by God in a noble, voluntary, sovereign, unconstrained will. For also in Hebrew the word 'of free spirit' denotes . . . a free or gracious, untrammled spirit of goodwill. Whatever service is forced does not endure; whatever is done of a free will abides."²⁵⁰

Not the thought of reward compels to love of God, but the Christian is compelled rather by an inner thankfulness. To love and to be thankful are one. Thankful love is born of faith in God, of the knowledge that God is God. "Faith gives Christ unto you as your own with all His possessions. Love gives you unto your neighbor with all your possessions. Christian life is founded upon and in these two articles . . ."²⁵¹ This love is not made manifest in that we perform single good deeds, but that we give ourselves entirely, and personally place ourselves at the disposition of our fellow men. Since God has done all things for us, we can not min-

ister to Him; therefore we give succor to men in gratitude toward God.

The command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," excepts no one, neither friend nor foe. This love, this "charity" ought to be a perpetually flowing fountain rising in the inmost recesses of the heart, a living and continual spring of water which can never be exhausted. And Luther insists that the Christian love neither the goodness nor the wickedness of his neighbor, for his spring of love flows from the Word become his own fount. Thence the love of the neighbor flows, spreading wherever there is need and watering all, both friend and enemy. And it is more especially ready for the enemies, for they have the greater need for it. By the indwelling of the Word the heart is rendered pure and filled with true love, and is urged neither forward nor driven back by regard to the person, either good or bad. Everyone ought to perform the duty laid upon him by this wellspring which is the will of God and to exercise works of love. Let each serve his neighbor with "alms, prayer, work, fasting, advice, comfort, teaching, admonition, reproof, exculpation, clothing, food, and, if need be, suffer and die for him."²⁵²

Our love for God, in Luther's words, must be an overflowing love, an austere, strong, bitter love, "strong as death, and grim as hell," willing to suffer damnation through Him if it be His will. One must experience this "betaking oneself into hell," this purgatory of imperfect love if one is to know the meaning of the love of God. The love that can endure the pangs of hell will likewise overcome damnation. In the love of God hell is turned into heaven, blessedness, and felicity. Where God reigns, hell comes to an end. To love God for His own sake is to have boundless trust in the boundless; and through this trust and love man becomes one with Him. Without grace no such love is possible. The Holy Spirit pours a love into man's heart which grows and increases in strength; it is urged beyond all things visible and comprehensible toward the mysterious center of the universe, until in fulfillment it unites itself with the Infinite.

Christian Faith

In his large commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians Luther put the central doctrine of his theology into these words: "This

one article rules my heart, namely, faith in Christ, and out of it, through it, and toward it flow all of my theological deliberations day and night.”²⁵³ Luther’s faith is complete trust in the righteousness of God. In this righteousness God is righteous and makes us righteous. God therefore is the God who is creative in love. He is the Creator who wills and effects, who reveals Himself in Christ and brings His creature into that relation to Him which is His will. It is His nature to impart of Himself. God gives Himself, His own righteousness, His grace. It is His goal to bestow His grace and thereby His righteousness — our justification. The righteousness of God as understood by Luther is a wholly new reality, a wholly new activity in Him; in it man receives a new evaluation, freedom from guilt. Christ is this righteousness of God. And in laying hold of “Christ given for us” in faith, He becomes at once “Christ in us,” the resurrected, living, active Christ, victor over sin and death.

In the act of justification the sinner receives Christ in faith and Christ dwells within; thus justification is simultaneously regeneration. Faith is the work of God in man. Our need, our sin brings the compassionate God to us. Because of his sin and guilt, the sinner accepts the Gospel; he can no longer live before God except he believe; without faith he is lost. The way of faith in the Gospel is the only possible way, for it is mankind’s sole salvation. In faith the sinner seizes God, comprehends Him, comprehends too that all truth and goodness come from Him, and that knowing Him “as he really is” contains within itself all things.

Faith is more than thought. “If you deem faith to be thoughts and thinking of God,” you are wrong, for “thought can bestow eternal life as little as can a monk’s cowl.” Faith must be plain, straightforward, simple thinking of God, to be sure; “but my heart must seize and lay hold of Christ . . . and beyond the thinking I must possess a heart that rests on Him.”²⁵⁴ Faith is a “certain recognition,” a “downright thinking about God.” The object of faith is the hidden, spiritual activity of God inaccessible to reason. Our intellect is “darkened” in faith, it is made captive in obedience to Christ. This obedience however actually makes possible a deeper “seeing,” a true “understanding.” Faith “knows” that the remote and terrifying God, despite all hiddenness, is near, merciful, and kind. Faith “knows” by experience.

Through faith and the love it bears, man possesses everything, and is able to do all things. In faith the volitional being is bound to God, the will receives and accepts God and His gifts, and conditioned by the measure of faith, the physical benefits follow upon the spiritual. For faith is a direct unity with divine life. "He [the Christian] is a king and priest, spiritually. For his kingdom is in spiritual things, as truth, wisdom, peace, joy, blessedness. However, temporal goods are thereby not withheld, for all things in heaven, earth, and hell are subject to him . . . although he rules spiritually, invisibly."²⁵⁵

In faith we "have God."²⁵⁶ Faith is the substance of God, the reality of His Spirit in us, the Spirit of love sent into the heart of the believer, a breathing of the Word of God into man's heart. It is a writing in the heart with fiery flame, a quickening that leaps into fiery tongue and active hand; it infuses an excellence that begets light, fortitude, and an ardor, which desires only what is pleasing unto God; in faith man is truly the temple of the Holy Spirit. Faith is a sustained confidence in the mercy of God toward us, which lives in the heart, and is there effectually active; in faith we cast ourselves wholly upon God and entrust ourselves to Him. And it is impossible that this efficacy and life of faith be in any one and not bring forth fruit unto God. For faith is the work of God in us, by which we are born again, renewed of God and the Spirit of God, and are wholly transformed in all things. Faith in God is the chiefest worship, faith is an almighty thing. There can be no more holy religion in the world, nor more acceptable unto God, than faith is. These two things, to believe and to love, make up the whole sum of Christianity.

The way of justification by grace through faith is the only possible way between God and man; not primarily because man is a sinner, but foremost and chiefly because God is God. He is the Creator, He alone can endow man with glory and righteousness. He alone can give Himself to man. Man can but receive in joy and exultation. Thus Luther's analysis of Galatians 2:20 reads: "Therein that Christ inheres in me in close union, and thus remains in me, He lives my life in me, indeed the life, through which I thus live, is Christ himself: Christ and I are in this respect wholly one," so that "through faith," I am "so to speak one person" with

Him, and with Him I “have all things in common.”²⁵⁷ In faith Christ is our brother, and God is our Father. Indeed, Luther’s faith can say, “Christ and I crawl one into the other, I am Christ and Christ is I in such manner that He dies for me and I shall not have to die.”²⁵⁸ This faith knows no measure nor can it cease proclaiming its elation. As late as 1543, Luther’s exuberance offers proof of the sustaining energy of his faith: “The Son of God, who became our flesh and blood, wishes not only to be our brother, but also our bridegroom, and as such He gives us all His divine possessions, wisdom, life, strength, power, so that in Him we are to participate in His divine nature.”²⁵⁹

“But our hearts are too confined and bound, and the comfort [of His words, ‘I ascend to my Father and to your Father’] is far too abundant and altogether too boundless, so that we can not grasp it, even though we hear it daily. Wherever it falls into the heart, however, and is seized in faith, there must ensue that the heart is made merry, and in comparison with this brotherhood [with Christ] despise all things in the world. . . . For if I am the brother of Christ, as Christ here states expressly, then must attend incontestably, that I am established with Christ in total life and in equal inheritance, and that in common with Him I own all possessions, that are His.”²⁶⁰ Since God is in Christ, and Christ himself is present in the Christian, man is made an instrument of God, who effects all things in all.

Faith is active divine grace, conscious salvation in the soul; it is the inworking of God transforming and quickening heart, mind, and soul, and creating a new and other life. It is the deed of the Holy Spirit in the heart, “which sanctifies the whole of man, both inwardly and outwardly”;²⁶¹ it is the reception and recognition of supra-sensible truth, an independent faculty of knowledge, an “*a priori*” knowing and having. It is the nature of faith that it presumes upon the grace of God and derives from it a perfect trust in Him. In this assurance faith acts, forms, creates, plants the seed of eternity into all temporal life and activity. “Oh, faith is a living, creative, active, mighty thing, and it can do no other than ceaselessly bring forth the good.”²⁶²

The believer must depend entirely upon faith, not only because he can not stand before God in his sinful works and being, but

more particularly because he can and may not bring anything, and if it were perfection and holiness itself, before the Lord of all life, by which he could create and secure his existence before God. His whole existence "hangs on" the certainty of God's grace — and faith in it. "Faith is a quickened, daring certainty in God's grace, so certain, that for its sake he [the Christian] would suffer a thousandfold death. And such certainty and knowledge make happy, intrepid, and merry before God and all creatures: which is the work of the Holy Spirit in faith. Therefore without compulsion he is made to do good unto all willingly and gladly, to serve everyone, to suffer all things out of love of God and to the glory of Him, who has shown him such grace . . . so that it is as impossible to separate works from faith, as it is impossible to separate burning and light from fire."²⁶²

Luther's experience of faith is not an experience as understood by the natural philosophers of his day, as by Paracelsus, for instance. True faith does not spring from natural cognition, but is a gift from God which imparts sensitivity and obedience to the Impossible and the Invisible. Faith relates to the Incarnation of Christ and its mysteries, and for these nature offers no parallel. The all-creating God wills to be found in His revelation, which is in Christ. Therefore faith must cling to the Word of God, must be obedient to the paradoxical Word, in which He is revealed. God's promise to mankind is fulfilled in Christ. And it is the prayer of faith that now and always the promise made in Christ be and remain a reality within. For there is no faith without promise, even as there is no promise without faith. "Promise and faith hang together inseparably."²⁶³

Faith is nothing less than God revealed to man, and the individual's direct relation to Him in this communication of divine truth. Luther refers to the receptivity so essential to faith in his consideration of I Peter 1:15: "They lack faith to whom Christ has not been revealed . . . a Christian experiences such revelation within himself. . . . For he who is a Christian enters with Christ into the communion of all His possessions: because Christ is holy he too must be holy."²⁶⁴ Faith is perfect trust even in the face of all contrast, futility, contradiction, and suffering that life holds. The believer sees no meaninglessness in life, but his faith beholds

man reborn, and his heart and mind transformed. "And if reason habitually leans upon the present, faith embraces the absent and pronounces that precisely this [the absent] is present, contrary to all reason."²⁶⁵ Faith has an eye for God and sees light where others see darkness; it has an ear for God and hears the rhythm of God and His activity, where others hear dissonance.

In faith the Christian is "cheerful and happy for Christ's sake . . . and his whole joy is to serve God gratuitously in unbounded love."²⁶⁶ Through the work of love love grows. "Such confidence and faith begets love and hope; indeed, if we look at it rightly, love begins, is ever co-existent with faith."²⁶⁷ The sincere conviction and clear consciousness that what we do and think and will is also God's will, is the most potent force in life. So, according to Luther, the seemingly impossible is accomplished through faith; for if Christ lives in us, we need have no fear, for He can not be idle! He is entirely active will!

Moreover, to have faith is to "receive," to "have" God. "In right faith a Christian has all possessions that are God's, and is a son of God . . . here on earth he is still a pilgrim, but his spirit is already in heaven in faith, through which he is a master over all things."²⁶⁸ Hence, faith is more than human illusions or dreams. Man, impotent, bound to the finite and to despair, experiences the miracle of finding his servile fear transmuted into trust and joyousness through the pledge of God's unfailing love, faithfulness, compassion, good will: in this miracle eternal life is his, won and made manifest through the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ, the Son of God. The Majestic and Holy One now wears the countenance of a loving Father, the sinner is in fact the child of God, and from the assurance of his divine childhood streams an inner power which makes him a Christ, a servant, to his fellow men and his life divine worship. Only he in whom love and light are brought to life, can bring that life to unfoldment that is well-pleasing to God; only of such is the "community of saints," only in this, his own priesthood, can man bridge the gulf fixed between Spirit and world.

It is the will of God that He remain God, the alone Creator and Lord. Therefore the sinner, the righteous, regenerated, sanctified believer must build his existence upon the grace of God. If

he refuses, he becomes guilty of the grievous sin of blasphemy: he denies that God is God. Thus for Luther the one grace, the one faith is founded in the final analysis not in the main upon the reality of sin, not upon the need of man, but first and foremost upon the Godhead of God, and upon the humanity of man. The whole foundation of faith rests upon the one fact: "God is."

In the realm of faith Luther's Christianity enthrones the believer as a king, in the realm of love he is a priest. And Christ, present in us, speaks and works in us. "Hence we ought to continue in such certainty that God speaks and works in us that our faith could say: it is God who acted and spoke in that which I spoke, in that which I did; such must be my assurance that I die in [this faith]." ²⁶⁹

Faith makes free. Luther's words are: "A Christian is free and unfettered of all things and stands untrammelled above all things, so that he requires no works to make him devout and blessed." ²⁷⁰ Certainly there is here no objection to good works as such, but the emphasis has shifted: the living presence of the Triune God in the soul impels the Christian to goodness, and all of life and living and doing is purified and sanctified thereby; therefore there are no particular works through whose performance salvation or heaven are or can be achieved. "Good works, even as they do not engender faith, likewise do not engender devoutness; but faith, even as it makes devout, begets good works." ²⁷¹ Good works must flow out of a free impulse, as "love and joy in God flow out of faith, and out of love a free, willing, and cheerful life, which gladly serves man gratuitously." ²⁷²

Thus monasticism was no longer needed in preparation for salvation, nor a covenanted renunciation of life's enjoyments through chastity and poverty. Life was not meant to be ascetic world-flight. Life must become a "willing and ready performance of that, which pleases God," ²⁷³ a constant service. Though faith is not a good work, it is a master and the life of the work, it possesses the power to develop the full ethos in man, to incite to joyous doing. It penetrates and transforms all of man. The deeds proceeding from a sanctified inner life are an acting on behalf of and with God in every way. And the greater the talent, the greater the responsibility to minister to others so that God may bring

about greater things also through those who have lesser talents. But requisite for all activity are utter humility and the knowledge that we can bring no gifts to the altar except those wrought in us by God. Thus does a Christian become a "co-worker with God," even though his faith be weak. "For were it as certain and strong as it ought to be, we should not be able to live because of joy."²⁷⁴

Faith is no relaxed possession, no quietistic repose or revelry in God. It lays hold of the Absolute, it is at rest in itself, yet by nature dynamic. It is both passive and active. The will of the believer, filled with the love of God, is free toward all things, because beside this love no thing can exercise any coercive power over him. Independent of things, he develops "freedom," creative freedom. Man is free in so far as he believes and loves—a knowledge and experience eternally closed to the merely "moral" man.

"Christian freedom," the release of man's whole inner power, which formerly had passed life by because it had been distracted and exhausted in a thousand outward pious works, now ennoble every daily task, now streams fully and freely into all doing and performance as love and service to God and man. Even though in the eyes of the world men are unequal, before God all are equal: children of Adam, God's creation, and each of worth before the other. The character of man was exalted in Luther's Reformation, all talents and energies were consecrated through faith in the Absolute. Supreme dignity was made equivalent to a selfless submission to the unconditioned One, to His ineffable goodness, to His will. The belief in a loving and forgiving Father must result in a life filled with peace, joy, and ethical spontaneity.

Luther did not systematize; there are far too great riches in him to be restricted to one formula. He directed and guided. He called for a temper sensitive to the experience of guilt and grace. He built religious truth on personal conviction and therewith pointed to an individually differentiated formulation of it. In his Evangelical theology subjection to the Law became a voluntary surrender of heart and mind to God. He discovered that God's Law is centered in the one word: love. "The commandment of love is a short commandment and a long commandment, one commandment and many, it is no commandment and all, in such wise that the works

of all commandments are and should be the works of love."²⁷⁵ Thus the righteousness of works was translated into a living piety and spontaneous thankfulness sprung from conscious union with Christ. The agony and dread occasioned by the consciousness of the lost sinfulness of his nature which had made existence impossible to Luther, the monk, had through the act of grace undergone complete transmutation; body, soul, and word and deed, were now bound into the being and possession of the Giver of all good and perfect gifts.

Faith proved strong and unconquerable even though outer appearance and inner trial argued defeat and weakness. It endowed him with that sublime courage, born of certitude, which rises superior to all doubt, all fears, all suffering. He recognized no rebuff except as a step to victory. For in faith he had strength to endure, patience, certainty, and serenity in that peace which passes understanding.

In a sermon on the Second Epistle of Peter, 1524, "may grace and peace increase among you," Luther summarized the meaning of Christian faith: "To have God is to have all grace, all mercy, and everything one can call good. To have Christ is to have the Saviour and Mediator, who has accomplished for us that God is ours. . . . Through the power of faith we participate in, have fellowship with divine nature . . . What is the nature of God? It is eternal truth, righteousness, wisdom, life eternal, peace, joy, and delight, and whatever is called good. Whosoever participates in the nature of God has eternal peace, delight, and joy, and is undefiled, pure, just, and almighty in overcoming devil, sin, and death."²⁷⁶ The uncertainty of doubt, its encircling mists had vanished, and the blackness of despair was changed to light.

FAITH, THE SOURCE OF JOY AND PEACE

Luther believed that every conception begets a corresponding deed; since religious faith is a conception of God and since the right conception of the true God sees Him as Goodness, and as the Being that wills all things in love, true faith can bring forth goodness only. Love, joy, peace are the fruits of faith, and in the joyousness of faith suspense and tensions are overcome, and exalted deeds and conduct are inevitable. The felt presence of God within

enlightens with a clear light of purified vision. Christ is the Way, He, in us and outside us, brings a new life to unfoldment by means of His passion and crucifixion, by means of that active inner suffering whose fruit is faith, growth, and development. In the freedom of faith this new life is spontaneity, cheerfulness, vivacity, sincerity, childlike confidence, and simplicity. It is the union of a sweet and benevolent heart with a noble, princely, unconstrained will. It is the life of the Spirit yielded unto itself.

“For the Word makes gracious, gentle people, tranquil, joyous hearts, that neither despair in distress nor become impatient.”²⁷⁷ At times God asks nothing of His children except silence and patience. He asks that everyday trials and annoyances of life be borne quietly and calmly that our strength be increased, that days of trouble and calamity be met with fortitude. God takes delight in our daily work when we do it, out and out, in confidence and joy, while trusting and waiting in patience. For every genial endowment, all love, hope, benevolence, daily engagement of our abilities must now and then be put into the crucible to distil patience, which is complete, trusting, joyous knowing and surrender. In this active, concentrated strength in God, in unflinching endurance and wisdom the Christian learns to bear and forbear for the sake of inner and outer peace. In 1531, when the most intense and perilous days of his battle were over, Luther still stood in need of this strength of soul over against the world and his conscience: “I must have patience with the Pope, I must exercise forbearance toward the zealots, I must have patience with those, who would defame me, I must bring perseverance to bear toward the domestic servants, I must be patient with Käthe von Bora; and of [needful] patience there is so much, that my life seems to require nothing other than patience. The prophet Isaiah says [Isaiah 30: 15]: ‘In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength,’ that is, have patience, be long-suffering, hope, and do not despair in your conscience.”²⁷⁸ Therein lies all pleasure and all power. A patient, humble disposition gathers blessings, it subdues pride and stifles displeasure, it bridles the tongue and restrains the hand, and endows with the courage of the conqueror. “For the Word makes gracious, gentle people, tranquil, joyous hearts.”

And above all: “Wherever a heart thus belongs to Christ, it

must be joyous, receive comfort in its very foundation, it must grow in sweet affection toward Christ and love Him."²⁷⁹ Through the knowledge of the goodness of God the heart becomes so sensitive and delicate that nothing can be enjoined so great and so arduous which it would not readily undertake and courageously accomplish. For he "serves God and thanks Him that He is using him in whatever station as His instrument."²⁸⁰ All "creatures are God's masks and mummery, who are to work with Him and assist in doing whatsoever."²⁸¹ For where Christ dwells there is a plenteous fullness.

Luther's fount of joy and jubilation was as inexhaustible as his gift in exegesis was extraordinary. The brief exposition of Psalms 1-25 written in 1530 was filled to overflowing with every stir, every nuance of gladness and assured trust. The verse "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies," Ps. 23: 5, conveyed to him: "This is truly a remarkable safeguard and protection that a table is prepared against my enemies . . . I am not only inwardly comforted through the Word, and raised up in the midst of adversity, but I vanquish all enemies outwardly by means of the Word; and achieve this so surely, that, while they rage . . . I dwell in luxury, eat and drink of the Word inwardly, richly, and in gladness, even as though I were sitting at a table splendidly and deliciously laid . . . the Word of God is the victory over devil, world, flesh, sin, conscience, and death. All these enemies flee and can not endure it. Such is the strange, bold power, strength, and glory of the believers, that they defeat and overcome their enemies while eating, drinking, having comfort and luxury, in being still, being joyous, dwelling in peace and quiet by the power of the Word; not with violence, anger, rage, resistance, oppression, and revenge". . . . And the following verse: "And anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over": "thou makest me a king, which is more than the most high victor among the victorious and the supremely joyous among the joyful . . . my cup, my fraction of the cross is no cross . . . but exultant in victory, my cup overflows with solace and joy as a brook waters and refreshes a parched and thirsty meadow."²⁸²

A fixed, permanent cheerfulness, a buoyancy of spirit ought to be the Christian's constant mode of relation to circumstances ex-

ternal or internal, to circumstances collectively. Luther was aware that in the workaday world a task fatigues and becomes burdensome when engaged in reluctantly and with dislike; however, undertaken "with mirthful and willing heart . . . one neither knows nor feels either toil or trouble . . ." ²⁸³ and it is done in a trice. In order that the "heart might make merry in joy," Luther published a hymnal in 1525, in which, he wrote in the Preface, he "arranged the hymns for four-part singing for no other reason than that I should like that youth, who shall and must be brought up in music and other fine arts, have something to replace wanton songs; and that youth, as becomes it, enter into the spirit of the good with joy. Furthermore, I'm not of the opinion that the fine arts be rejected because of the Gospel, and disappear as some mistaken clergy advocate, but I desire that all the arts, especially music, serve Him, who gave and created them." ²⁸⁴

Luther's piety was not a planned undertaking, it was rather an unconditioned readiness and trust in God. The will, alert, assured, becomes creative, its released "childlikeness" imbues with an unanxious calm, with that unconcern which is the peace compassing an emancipated soul. It bestows an ease in prompt ethicalness, a benignness, that transmutes all things and all tasks by the sheer glow of its goodness. The gifts of this world are to be accepted with joyousness and thanksgiving, and are to be used freely through faith.

All honest toil is a beneficent gift from on high. "God confirms all handicraft, professions, trades . . . in so far as they are honest and praiseworthy . . . be they those of the burgher, peasant, shoemaker, tailor, clerk, horseman, master, or servant . . . they are vocations instituted by God." ²⁸⁵ Whatever God ordains is good. "Here in truth the heart ought to laugh in joy" and the Christian ought to exult to find himself in a position established by God, and "leaping and dancing, sing praises to Him for such divine ordaining, for such knowledge and assurance that his station in life," be he servant, maid, son, daughter, man, woman, master, subject, whatever his office, whatever his work "is called an honor and jewel before God . . . beautiful as a bride at a wedding, as a girl elegantly attired, as a doll adorned for a festival." ²⁸⁶ In itself it is not wrong to have "money, goods, land, and servants, they

are the gifts of God . . . but you may not cleave to them nor hang your heart on them."²⁸⁷

God is bountiful in bestowing His riches upon us, both spiritual and corporal. We must "taste" for ourselves and experience that God is willing and eager to care for the needs of the body, and He will also supply us with spiritual good and raiment for our souls. For the soul is worth a thousand times more than the body. Because we know we are His creatures, and the work of His hands, we place all our hope in Him who is more concerned about us than we are about ourselves. God will grant grace and shower us with happiness because of His promises. Unbelief is the parent of every kind of want, for reason looks only on that which is present, and is not receptive to that which is out of sight. The rich man (Luke XVI) was not condemned because he indulged in sumptuous fare and splendid raiment. Many "holy" kings and queens were adorned in royal apparel, Solomon, Esther, David, Daniel. But he was condemned because his heart was taken with and went after these things, and his substance was spent upon them; and because he sought all his joy, pleasure, and comfort from them; in fact, made them his idols.

God does not frown upon the comforts of life, nor upon the proper adornment of the person. "God is not displeased if one adorns oneself and lives rather well . . . and of dancing one might speak as of adornment. It is true, as is often said, that [dancing] incites to enticement and sin, if carried beyond moderation and propriety . . . but, if it is done in pure joy, modestly, and is not disgraceful in manner, words, or demeanor, it is not to be condemned."²⁸⁸ One must let the world have its way, he advised, except in excess, and not be disturbed in conscience if a bride is fairly adorned, if there is eating, drinking in moderation and chaste dancing. Rebecca, Isaac's bride, was elegantly groomed, and more than that, her deportment was admirable, as becomes a maiden. "She was helpful and pleasant to everyone, especially to the guests and pilgrims, hospitable; she appeared refined, humble, and chaste in her manner toward people, and dignified in mien as beautifully becomes a young woman. To be modest and proper in deportment, to cast down the eyes and not swagger, is the best and loveliest adornment, lovelier than all the gems one might wear."²⁸⁹

The body needs attention and care for the sake of efficiency in spiritual and physical tasks, but it may not become wanton.

Natural enjoyment within the bounds of moderation and seemliness is a blessing bestowed by God, and is in itself good and right, for it is created of God with its gifts, joys, and employments. However, these must be attended by propriety, good manners, and purity, and by measure and moderation in the natural inclinations.²⁹⁰ Temperance applies to all aspects of daily life, it includes restraint from murmuring against that which God allots. This eagerness to please God in whatever we do in our tasks and station in the world fundamentally opposed the ascetic world-flight of the monastic orders of the Church of Rome. This surrender to God's will takes place not in seclusion and separation from the world, nor outside human society.

In his exegesis of Jacob's weeping and mourning upon news of the death of his son Joseph, Luther pointed out that God implanted natural impulses in man and does not spurn them. When in spontaneity of feeling man is aware of the goodness and beauty in nature, he approaches the likeness of God in which he was made. Natural urges are good, when man carries God in himself, and they are directed by divine Spirit. "God indicated Gen. 37 that He does not condemn [our human] nature, but lets it remain in the saints in order that He may improve and justify it. Now and then He allows one or the other to become so intoxicated with the Holy Spirit that he esteems no thing on earth; however in general He grants that in our natural creaturehood we feel and are moved as He created us. For in so far as sin does not assist in its direction and rule, no natural stirring is evil."²⁹¹

How is it possible, he asked, to believe that we please God in whatever we do, when we speak, drink, eat, laugh, engage in banter, and take joy and comfort in pleasant conversation? Honorable association with people he answered, entails that we meet them in a spirit of blithesomeness and buoyancy, that we enter upon sagacious, ingenious, and witty discourse, that we laugh and jest. "I do not at all refer here to tomfoolery, excessive laughter, or the infamy of an evil tongue, for even worldly good manners do not condone these. But . . . you must surely believe that God is pleased if you address your brother with a joyous face, and in-

vite him with an engaging smile, or that now and then you take delight in a pretty word, an agreeable or perspicacious expression . . . but do not let kindness degenerate into frivolity, boisterous buffoonery, and shamelessness."²⁹²

No doubt Luther's own natural talent inclined him to this catholicity of mind; but it had its roots more explicitly in his principle of faith. He trusted the power of faith to direct this generous freedom from restraint in natural life. The inner disposition, he was convinced, would correctly evaluate and proportion externalities. The spiritual and the natural ought to be so interfused as to preserve candour, ease, unaffectedness, simplicity, and cheerfulness, so characteristic of his personality, and so desired by him in the Christian. Melancholy is a poison. It is better to be of good courage, to ride and hunt and exercise diligence in seeking out good company. Joyousness is the best medicine for all. Let go of heavy thoughts, they are suggested by Satan. "There is no lovelier, more acceptable offering than a merry heart which rejoices in the Lord."²⁹³ Faith, the work of the Holy Spirit, renews, recreates, transforms, and joy is the inevitable mood of the Christian.²⁹⁴

God hates dolefulness. It does not admit of the heart's thankfulness. And where there is no thankfulness, there is no joy. And the consequence is clear to Luther. Illness "is a fruit of sadness. . . . For when the heart is grieved and downcast, the body's infirmity follows. The real illnesses are the illnesses of the heart."²⁹⁵ Many of the ills of humanity stem from failure to obey God's one commandment, "Thou shalt love." Love of God and man harmonizes, heals, and destroys the sickness of doubt and unbelief in His promises, in His omnipotence. Our hymns annoy the devil and hurt him. Sadness, wretchedness, and illness often obtain, because we do not fully trust God. All joy, comfort, peace, a heart rejoiced in Christ, are gifts of God.²⁹⁶ But the sins of the heart, of the mind, react on the body. "Why does Christ so often proclaim forgiveness of sin to the ill in body? . . . Sin . . . is the cause of illness . . . God sends no illness into the world except through the devil; for all despondency or illness comes from the devil, not from God . . . Whatever is related to death, that is the devil's handiwork, artifice, and work; and again, whatever is related to life, that is the mercy and beneficence of God, which permits of no sadness."²⁹⁵

Dejection by its very nature denies the promises, power, and saving grace of God; it exalts the power of evil in some form and gives it control when we should be laying hold of the almighty and ever-present help of God to accomplish our rescue. "Physicians have regard only to the *causas naturales* in illnesses, but they do not realize that Satan often brings illness upon one where there is no natural cause. Therefore there is need of nobler medicine if the devil's epidemic is to be curbed, namely faith and prayer, and a seeking of spiritual remedy in the Word of God."²⁹⁷ Whosoever shall not grow weary . . . whosoever shall not doubt in his heart . . . to him shall be given strength. For "we ought in all truth rejoice in Christ without ceasing . . . so that in our joy we may be perfectly happy and well, and neither sorrowful nor ill."²⁹⁸

Joyous faith and thanksgiving but mark and acknowledge according to Luther, that the natural habits of the creatures of God are in themselves pure and good, that the Christian may not sinfully abuse them; and further, that sinful inclination is not conquered by voluntary abstinence and deprivation. God approves a warm tenderness for His creation and creatures, in truth, it is for this reason they were made, for: "everything lovely and beautiful instils love by nature."²⁹⁹ Indeed, in Frankfurt, on his way to decision in Worms, Luther played the lute and sang. Love is in everything that is by nature lovely and beautiful, and loving-kindness of God expressed in it must be maintained and activated through thankful enjoyment and use of it. Nature in her loveliness communes with the Christian, and endows with serenity and gives direction to his course. On the occasion of his debate with Dr. Eck in Leipzig, Luther ascended the rostrum with flowers in his hand. "In all my diligence and expectation I tarry and gladly dwell with Him whom I love."³⁰⁰ For "He is pleasing and sweet to my heart."³⁰¹

PRAYER

How can I remain in faith? Luther sought salvation, the certainty of redemption from eternal damnation consequent upon sin, and this he found in the grace of God revealed in Christ and effected by Him. This is Christian theology and was not new with him. The force of Luther's greatness lies in the lofty, simplified, impassioned, plastic manner in which he extricated this essential

kernel from obscurity, from the insecurity attendant upon the merit of human collaboration in the achievement of grace, from exterior, and oft-times bewildering authority. True religion, he came to experience, imbues the soul with security and strength, infuses with a sense of sublimity, for it touches the very Godhead itself. Furthermore, person finds to person, the believer finds a personal God, the child comes to his Father.

But by what means is this faith which is love supported and promoted, so that one may unceasingly serve God and man in thought, word, and deed? Luther gave one invariable answer. One must be drawn into communion of love with Him who is the dispenser of all salvation and felicity. St. Paul's admonition to the Romans to "continue instant in prayer" summons the Christian to his incessant duty. For he who believes in God presumes in no thing, but seeks all things through prayer. To be sure, a most arduous way. Luther asserted over and over there is no work as austere as exacting and difficult as is confident prayer to God;³⁰² for such prayer requires a subdued, humble, and bruised mind, and withal an exalted and triumphant spirit; and these come from God, through faith alone. Faith, humble and triumphant, is but a kind of perpetual prayer. And in prayer, petition and praise belong together; true prayer demands thanksgiving as its first condition. "The supreme service to God is to thank Him."³⁰³

The petitioner must submit to the fact that God is a hidden God, baffling to all comprehension and thinking; and if it appears that He does not answer prayer or that He sends the exact opposite of that which we ask, we may be certain, that right prayer, offered in the right spirit will be answered. How did God answer Jacob's prayer? He could have rescued Joseph, and his father would have rejoiced. But Joseph would have remained a shepherd. Eventually he came to be lord over Egypt, and through him Egypt and all lands round about were helped. "Thus also does God do with us. If He continuously denies our petition and replies with 'No,' we however adhere to the 'Yes,' the answer will finally be 'Yes' . . . Be on your guard, that hope and faith in His promise be not snatched from your heart; finally then [though it be two or three years or longer] something that will by far exceed what you asked for, must come of it."³⁰⁴ All asking in faith shall

assuredly be heard and granted. But “whoever does not believe God’s promise must indeed know that he excites God to anger.”³⁰⁵

It is truly a cause for wonder and amazement that a Christian does not pray continuously, since God answers so graciously, invites and persuades us to ask, seek, and knock. Would that we were as zealous in prayer, at least with sighings of the heart, as He is with His inducements, allurements, commands, promises, and entreaty to prayer. “Whosoever does not receive nor find, most assuredly has neither prayed nor sought; and to whomsoever the door is not opened, he has not knocked. There can be no doubt at all that the lack is in us if we want. God can not fail us. He, who is so willing, so inclined, and ready to give, that He not only commands that we ask, that we seek diligently, and confidently knock; but even assures us on His solemn oath . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you . . .”³⁰⁶ If God granted our limited petition, His bountiful goodness would thereby be hindered. If we be but tranquil in our hearts and commit it to His pleasure we shall learn how exceeding abundantly He rewards us.

Silent, inward prayer exceeds all thinking, and as its significance is deeper and richer than the sound of the words, so also is the answer far more remarkable. He “gives answer to the very foundation of our desire, which lies hidden in the inmost depths of the heart, and which surpasses all thinking. And while God does this, the suppliant remarks with wonder and awe, that he received even that for which he did not dare ask. And thus is made true: that for which the spirit prays it does not ask, and that which it does not ask it prays for.”³⁰⁷

The efficacy, the potency of prayer requires that the heart be made ready, that it consciously divest itself of all distraction, that in all awareness it be imbued with earnestness and desire to place its longing and request before God. “Prepare your heart for prayer, in order that you may not blaspheme God” by proffering empty words. “Each and every thing, if it is to be well done, must engage all of man, all members and mind . . . how much more does prayer require a heart concentrated wholly and alone in singleness of thought.”³⁰⁸

Not despair, but trust ensures fulfillment. We must trust. And we can best learn to trust by learning to love. We should there-

fore be impelled to continue in prayer, to continue to ask for faith, for love, which infolds in itself all else and all things. "Therefore take heed: not *that* prayer is good and right which is profuse, pious, sweet, long . . . but [the prayer], which firmly trusts will be heard [however unworthy in itself] by reason of God's own avowal and solemn promise. His Word and promise make your prayer potent, not your devotion. . . . Faith, founded on His Word, is true devotion, and worship."³⁰⁹ Prayer does not change God, it changes us. Prayer lifts us out of belief in negation and opens our mind to His response. His good gifts are ever ready, we need but accept them. Prayer opens our being to His Spirit to give thanks that the perfect fulfillment of our needs is at hand, even though we do not at the moment perceive it.

To Luther "prayer is a singular exercise of faith," an act of worship; and faith makes prayer "so assuredly acceptable, that it is either most certainly fulfilled, or a better thing than we ask, is given for it."³¹⁰ "For I know of a certainty that as often as I prayed earnestly . . . I was richly answered and received more than I asked . . ."³¹¹ Only he who has experienced it can know how efficacious and powerful prayer is and how abundant the answer. "For our Lord God always gives more than we ask; He answers my petition for a piece of bread with the gift of a whole field."³¹² Luther's prayer in days of need was so magnificently answered, that he could assure every believer: "All who call upon God in right faith with earnest heart, shall most surely be heard and receive that for which they pray and which they desire, although perhaps not immediately, nor at the very hour, time, nor in the dimension, nor precisely that for which they ask. But they will receive a thing far better, greater, and more glorious than they dared hope for."³¹³ Of St. James 1: 6 and 7, which reads, "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord," Luther wrote, "That is a clear passage, which directly promises or refuses: whosoever does not trust will receive nothing, neither that which he asks nor a better thing."³¹⁴

Prayer and faith are of one piece, as are faith and God. Therefore Luther insisted: "If you . . . pray, pray in the certainty that

God will answer: otherwise it is not prayer, but mockery and blasphemy of God.”³¹⁵ Take courage, pour out your heart’s desires, “and should they be bags filled with wants. Pour them all out . . . do not cut them to bits for Him, He is not a human being who would soon weary of our begging and imploring. The more you ask the more pleased He is to answer. Pour it all out, entirely, not dribble-wise or trickle-wise. He will not answer in dribble and trickle, but overwhelm you with a flood.”³¹⁶ In his writings Luther exhorts to prayer with extraordinary frequency, variety of expression, and impassioned urgency.

Most of us fail not so much from lack of ability, as from lack of faith, he says. Anxiety, apprehension, or worry, all negative thought in its very nature denies the promises and power, the saving grace of God. It elevates and houses evil in some form and gives it control over us when we should appropriate the ever-available, almighty help of the Father to accomplish our rescue and give us protection. Our fear prevents that we think in dimensions commensurate with His eagerness to give. We are afraid to ask for enough! “For it is His delight that great things be requested of Him, for He prefers to grant what is glorious and supreme; and since He so gladly bestows what is great and superior, there will surely be no lack in the lesser things. Therefore it is better to seek the most excellent first.”³¹⁷

For God commanded us to pray and promised to hear us, so that we may believe that our petitions are acceptable to Him. God desires to grant that for which we ask, but He wants us to ask even though He knows our petition and our need before the prayer is formulated. Logically, the question Luther asked himself arises, why then should we pray? And his answer, certainly not because our prayer might inform Him of what He is to give us, “But rather that we recognize and acknowledge what the gifts are He does give, and how much greater those He would and can give; further, that by means of prayer we instruct ourselves, rather than Him . . . thus my heart is turned to Him and stirred to praise and thanksgiving [in the certitude], that He is my refuge, and that I look to Him for help.”³¹⁸ Prayer purposes that the oftener I come to Him the better I learn to know what kind of God He is. I discover that the more frequently I come into His presence the

more richly He gives. Therefore let your prayer be brief, but frequent and intense. "*Kurz soll man beten, aber oft und stark.*"³¹⁹

"The most exalted divine service and the most consummate religion is to believe that God truly is."³²⁰ "What is such faith but pure prayer."³²¹ Through prayer in faith the petitioner already has "all things"; and desire, longing for, is in reality the true prayer, which Christ teaches and God demands, which [likewise] obtains and is able to do all things. When we pray, "we act with God"; in prayer God requires of us the most exacting and most difficult of achievements, the "deed" which can be performed only in the unequivocal completeness of acting as His "co-worker."

Luther is certain that in trust in the pure goodness of God, the Christian receives that which he believes, seeks, and asks; for the spirit of prayer is the spirit of grace. In grace faith recognizes the favor of God and desires it without ceasing. We set out on our most sublime venture when we raise our hands and eyes to His Divine Majesty and approach to address Him. Our speech with Him, however difficult, is profoundly significant, for when we pray, we dare to be more active than passive toward Him. Despite all "God-monergism," God requires actually that in prayer a work rarely accomplished achieve its high completion, namely our work of acting with Him.

Luther comments further that the activity of God in His creatures redounds to His glory. He wills to deal with them, not in His absoluteness, but in His "regulated and orderly power." There would be no room for His work in His creatures, had He not revealed Himself; then He would remain "the hidden God." Since however He appeared in the flesh, He wishes to find His glory through and in His creatures. God willed to draw near to us in the flesh. He willed that this be the way of salvation. Therefore we are to pray to Him who revealed Himself in His mercy and loving-kindness, and to cling to His promise that He will hear us.

Faith is active in prayer. Luther's trust, justification by faith, is understood in its ultimate meaning when the meaning of prayer is included. For Luther's conception of prayer is intertwined with the fundamental motives of his theology: "our dear Father" wills that we, "His dear children" come to Him in prayer. Although

it is He Himself who prays in us and performs our deeds of love, nonetheless He wishes that we be active toward Him; therefore we are to pray and to praise Him. He who wills to be active in His creatures, to work and live in them wills that they glorify Him. And that is the glory of God that He is made manifest as God, as our God. In prayer He is our God, our Lord, our dear Father, our help and our salvation. Therefore prayer may be called an existential-practical act most critical for the Christian, for it is a question of continued existence in active faith, a matter of accepting the actuality of the answer from God. "He desires that we work and act with Him, and honors us in that He wishes to perform His work with us and through us. . . . He would honor us, so that heavenly bliss be not His alone, but He wishes to share it with us."³²²

In faith prayer affirms a felt thought, a "Word of Promise"; prayer is affirmation and joyous abandonment to this "Word," which works miracles, as made manifest and comprehensible in Christ. "In possession of the Word, the soul requires no other thing more; for in the Word are fullness, meat, joy, peace, light, ability, righteousness, truth, wisdom, freedom, and all blessings in superabundance."³²³ We must with all our hearts know and feel and declare the supreme power that is God's, the abundance He has prepared for us and made ever available. We must know and give thanks that there are no limitations to the store of blessings He longs to shower upon us. And to have faith in the Word is to accept the gifts of God. "That is an exalted, honorable dignity and an almighty dominion, a spiritual kingdom, in which no thing is so excellent, none so evil, but it must work together for my good, if I believe. . . . Behold the precious freedom and power of the Christian."³²⁴

These are assertions bold and undaunted. But Luther who had come through violent battle, danger, and anguish undefeated knew how great the Christian's expectations ought to be. "How great an authority is ours that we may ask what we will and [know] it shall surely and assuredly be. But first of all the Word must be present in us and remain in us; otherwise, the petition is vain and nothing. . . . The significant point is that we remain in Him; this is done when His words remain in us, that is, if we hold

fast to them in right faith and live them in deed; then all things are possible, and what we ask is surely granted."³²⁵ The Word, faith, worship, or prayer belong together and bring triumph and joy. "Oh, faith, faith, how hardly dost thou enter the heart! and yet how exceedingly blessed is he, who believes."³²⁶

Prayer is wrought in the most secret recesses of man's soul; it is a thought luminous with the light of God. It is the glow of thanksgiving and praise in His fathomless revelation. In union the explicable and inexplicable beget miraculous answer by the certainty that God is. Luther dared to define the unfailing potency of religious faith won in the practice of a trusting affirmation of the Word, derived from God, and to lay claim to the wonder-working power of fulfillment infixed in His promise.

SUMMARY

The Reformation was the culmination of a long agitation for national autonomy in matters of religion, indicated in the endless struggle between Empire and Papacy, a struggle which finally in 1077 sent Henry IV to Canossa, and again in the fourteenth century impelled France, Germany, and England to revolt against papal jurisdiction and interference in political and governmental affairs. The Reformation established man's prerogative as an individual, confronted him with the task of subjecting contemporary dogma and *Weltanschauung* to searching critique, stripped him of the shackles of the medieval Church and opened his eyes to a world that is good to look upon. He pondered this human world and in Luther's Christianity found the way again to personal responsibility and mundane pursuits. Luther no longer acclaimed asceticism, world-flight, monasticism as the chosen means of salvation either temporal or eternal. The earth, once so emphatically a vale of tears and the abode of darkness and sin, now "robed" an immanent God, proclaimed a joyous, hopeful splendor, and nature and man again spoke forth in gladdened accent. Christianity was disclosed as a religion not of dolefulness, but of promise and joyousness; it made aware of the perpetual industry in God's Creation and aroused to zealous activity.

The Reformation was not simply a restoration of the old basic

doctrine of the Roman Church. It was rather a revolution. It was most of all a revelation of new meaning in the evolutionary growth of the Christian religion. Luther, seeking and finding the essence of the old, deepened and strengthened it by purging it of all adulterating dross. By inner transformation and transfiguration a new view was brought forth, a new conception of Christianity.

For in Luther were come together and productively combined the terror and flight from the world, the yearning for salvation so patent in the Middle Ages; the drive of Humanism to return to the sources; linguistic ingenuity and penetration unsurpassed; the creativeness of the Renaissance, a belief in the arts dedicated to the glory of God; the temper of his people. And yet all this does not compass his genius. Out of the pangs of conscience he arrived at a doctrine of justification that is rationally incomprehensible; he found a refuge, a mighty fortress in the revelation of the Bible. In faith, which is the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit sent by the Father, salvation from sin was won, and triumph over anguish, doubt, and solitariness, together with a joyousness and activity in the world, in which God is present even in the poppy seed.

Man's relation to God is now an immediate one, one of receptivity; he needs only to receive God's love and grace. Of himself he can do nothing, God works the miracle in him. The Christian's freedom, that is, the Christian's security, is found in the inward presence of this infinite love and grace. The true dwelling-place of the kingdom of God is the inner world, and the true miracle is the inward proof of God, and the proof of the omnipotence of His love. It is the discovery of the truth, "If ye have faith . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you (Matt. 17: 20). It is the acceptance of His will, which wills our Good only, which is the overflowing love of the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God, whose indwelling Holy Spirit bestows the strength that rejoices in this further miracle within: "I can do all things through Christ" (Phil. 4: 13). This discovery must transform all of life. A new, own, active life is begotten in the knowledge that the whole of life depends on the unconditioned trust in that Supreme Power, which endows with all and every blessing. Every activity may

now become a pure service of God; simple, everyday work may be consecrated according to the conviction, "God's Word is our sanctuary and sanctifies all things."³²⁷

In this new relation of God to man, so keenly felt by Luther, grace and love eliminate the threat of the Law, and the "glory of Christ" makes priests and kings of all believers. The greater the burden of sin once was, the greater now the jubilation in the release from it. The greater the agony of doubt, the more joyous now the certainty of freedom, won through faith, in love.

Luther no longer thought of God and the world as irreconcilable antinomies. The emphasis upon the spiritual and the direct relation to God resulted in an emancipation from the world and simultaneously to the world. The intermixture of the spiritual with the sensuous had injected a strong materialism into the religious life of the Middle Ages, which often seemed to substitute the apparent for the essential. The Reformation, demanding a worship "in spirit and in truth," clearly defined and separated the world of spirit from the world of the "flesh"; but in the act of justification, in sanctification the body is made His holy temple. And since the world of appearance was no longer the embodiment of evil, there was no need of fleeing it in the hope of thus overcoming it.

In truth it is not necessary that our hearts and minds be stayed on God continuously. Rather, Luther would remind us "that most of our time is given to sleep, to eating, drinking, to work; our reason necessarily can not be continuously and actively concentrated on faith: no one is to be condemned if he does not think of the Bible every moment."³²⁸ Faith inherent, relaxed, trusting, nonetheless casts its aura on craftsman, hammer, and scythe alike. To be sure, this sharper differentiation between the spirit and the "flesh" did not entail the annulment of all asceticism. It did denote the abrogation of asceticism insofar as "fleeing the world" defined the world as evil in itself.

Luther's contemporaries believed him a half "daemon," and with reason, for surely there were deeper insights compacted in him than in all his contemporaries together. He came from beyond his age, and though he brought thunder and storm, there came with him the gentleness of soft breezes and the promise of peace.

He arose to wrestle with God, and he was led into the presence of the incomprehensible God, inscrutable in His Being. Because he did not waver, God granted him victory. To friend and foe he appeared as one who walked beyond their bounds and upon other paths, unknown to them. He belonged both to the old and to the new. But above all he belonged to the task and mission of seeking after truth, timeless and eternal.

LUTHER'S POSITION IN HISTORY

The ideas and ideals that account for Luther's greatness in the history of Western thought and spirit, ideas and ideals particularly influential in the development of German idealism, briefly summarized, are: his defiance of death for the sake of the purity of an idea, for the sake of freedom of faith and freedom of conscience: "I can not nor will I recant, for it is precarious and perilous to act against one's conscience";³²⁹ his searching solution of the fateful entanglement of good and evil; his transformation of a conscience trembling in fear into one unshaken in a faith and love wholly spontaneous; his conception of the state, not as an instrument of self-willed and self-seeking man and society, but as an order instituted by a just and loving God for the protection of right, justice, morality, peace; his staunch refusal to bow to external authority, whether pope or emperor, in matters relating to the true implementation of God's unalterable command to love Him with all one's being and one's neighbor as oneself; his creation of an own and immediate unity of the dualistic tension between nature and spirit; his conviction of faith based on the conception of will; his emphasis on the power of faith, the power of the affirmed "Word," which is the Father revealed in the Son, and communicated by the Holy Ghost; his insistence on the power of the freedom intrinsic in the kingdom of God. This regenerative force, mighty in establishing a "community of saints" in man's relation to man, and "the kingdom of God" in every human heart in its relation to the Creator and Father of all, needs to be pondered in this twentieth century. These tenets constituting Luther's spiritual greatness need to be explored, examined,

understood, felt. Here a goal is given to man, realizable in the vital act of faith, in the individual alone, in the realm of pure religion.

Luther's development was conditioned by St. Paul, St. Augustine, medieval theology and philosophy, by mysticism. Of St. Augustine Luther said: "Augustine was an excellent teacher . . . he taught the grace of God rightly. But once I came to understand St. Paul, I could no longer esteem any doctor [of theology]: they seemed quite insignificant. In the beginning I studied Augustine. Once the door to Paul opened and I knew the meaning of justification by faith, it was all over with [Augustine]."³³⁰ But there was beyond these influences a personal oneness in Luther, an individuality and distinctiveness in his nature, which makes his greatness truly immeasurable. Goethe referred to Luther's incommensurability when he observed to Eckermann, March 11, 1828: "One can not conceive of a time in future centuries when he [Luther] will cease to be productive."³³¹ On March 11, 1832, he made this observation concerning Luther: Through him ". . . we were able to return to the source and to grasp Christianity in its purity. We again have the courage to stand firm on God's earth and to feel ourselves in our God-endowed human nature."³³²

Luther's Reformation was and remains an extraordinary revolution in the history of mankind's religious and ethical development. Out of the full heart and intensity of the century Luther arose, and out of its fullness he surrendered a free soul to the holy bond of the Absolute. Over and above its awareness of the world, this Reformation of the Christian faith, this Renaissance of Christianity, shook the very foundation of human life and focused it on God. With all the pristine force of living nature in him Luther was driven to the life that "never rests"; for man, freed from the mediating authority of priest, hierarchy, and merit of works was elevated to the honor and exaltation of the Christian man, who "through the kingdom of Christ" establishes "the kingdom" on earth. "Through his kingship he is lord of all things; through his priesthood he possesses God [*ist er Gottes mächtig*]. For God does whatsoever he asks and wishes . . . Ps. 145:10."³³³ Man's spirit must be delivered not only from the body and the material world, "free of all things, and lord of all things,"³³³ but in agony of soul it must be freed within itself. The greater the freedom from all

outer binding, the stronger the tie to faith; in this liberation the spirit is "*Gottes mächtig*." And so the Reformation loosed outwardly, and both bound and freed inwardly.

The Reformation paralleled High-Renaissance and Humanism, movements also seeking liberation and expression, also fathering individualism; like them, the Reformation sprang from the drive to freedom, so rampant in the sixteenth century. Had it fostered individualism simply, had Luther been begotten and sustained by the limited *Zeitgeist*, had he been cast upon the stream of his time as a "liberator" purely, his glory would have vanished as a passing dream. But things of great and lasting moment are not of one single aspect; they are complementary within themselves in that they unite the relative and the absolute; and in Luther the individual was bound to the universal. Standing alone and held accountable, the troubled soul contended with its conscience and asked: How do I stand with God? The answer was given in the felt indwelling and inworking of God, in a personal faith. And through grace there is now "nothing more present and nothing more inward in all than God Himself."³³⁴ "Upon [Him] the heart completely relies."³³⁵ Strength and joy urge to the works of life, give meaning to activity in a world which but manifests the inner acting and doing of God.

Like the mystic, Luther pressed toward that unfathomed domain where chaos is transformed into cosmos, where light emerges from darkness. And he translated this infinite force into a power which dedicates profane callings to ends unknown to the world-conscious and secularizing Renaissance. The Reformation, drawing upon the unseen in the world of the seen, assuaged the heart's insistent anguish. In the crisis in which the entire person in its depravity is called to account by a just God, in the moment of annihilation where existence outside God is impossible, Christ is sent to apprehend and save not only the soul, but all of man, body, mind, and heart, and all the senses, as Luther experienced it. Indeed, the body too, as the doctrine of the resurrection of the body (I Cor. 15) clearly proved to the reformer. He could not live without spirit and faith, and he was led by God into the crucial depths of existence, that he might hear His answer.

The intellectual, aristocratic Renaissance adorned itself with

works of art and enriched itself in the sphere of cognition. Luther freed the soul from that which the Renaissance glorified, from the material world of outer reality; but the freed soul did not deny this world of the senses, but rather transformed it. In the Reformation God was made the center of man's total being. And as the body is hallowed through immersion in the saving Christ, so the Holy Spirit transmutes all things in heaven and on earth, from the splendor of this exterior world to the darkest abyss of inward despair. In this manner the Renaissance was transfigured in the Reformation. Beauty and knowledge fashioned the world of the Renaissance. Beyond these tokens of covenant with the world of appearance, the Reformation returned the world to the pure Gospel of Christ.

OTHER PROTESTANT LEADERS

1. *Melanchthon*

At the Diet of Spires in 1529 the Protestants effectually opposed Emperor Charles' insistence on the full execution of the Edict of Worms; however, a brilliant assembly of both Evangelical and Roman princes was summoned to discuss the still uncertain status of this Edict at the Imperial Diet of Augsburg, 1530. Since Luther stood under the ban of Church and Empire, he could not be present, and the Lutheran princes requested Philipp Melanchthon, 1497-1560, grandnephew of Reuchlin, versatile and cultured master of the liberal arts, scholar in theology and philosophy, loyal devotee to Humanism, professor at the University of Wittenberg since 1518, Luther's friend and collaborator, to draw up a confession of faith. This document, the *Confession of Augsburg*, presented at the Diet, formulated substantially the creed of the Lutheran Church.

In general Melanchthon agreed with Luther. In the *Loci*, 1521, he still acquiesced in Luther's conception of the act of grace as pure God-monergism. But Melanchthon's Aristotelianism and intellect later led him to grant that though man's will is by nature weak, it by no means remains idle in the work of regeneration. However, man's cooperation is limited to the appropriation of justification of faith. Melanchthon's theory of the will assumed that the Holy Spirit instills trust in God's promise and that this

trust is appropriated by the voluntary assent of the free will. With Erasmus he thus supported the Semi-Pelagian doctrine of synergism, which assumes that human effort cooperates with divine grace in the salvation of the soul.

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Melanchthon's treatment of the will's assent in salvation appears to be little less than human monergistic freedom. To be sure, man's collaboration in the appropriation of justification through faith is limited, and the justification itself remains untouched by it. However, Melanchthon here submitted values enunciated by classical antiquity, and in the act of grace subscribed to the validity of human reason, without thereby, as he believed, doing injury to the work of the Holy Spirit. Herewith, however, he abandoned a decisive article of Luther's position.

Since for Melanchthon reason and intellect constitute man as man, he naturally did not conceive of the will as denoting the "total man," as did Luther. Melanchthon's will was directed by the mind's intelligence. And through the mind he established the certainty of the Gospel. His intellectualism accepted that the Holy Spirit works through the mind to effect the act of regeneration. Surely such a view does not accord with that held by St. Paul and Luther. Luther preserved his God-monergism throughout, that is, the doctrine that regeneration is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit, that the unregenerate will has no power of cooperation. For Luther this acquiescence through which Christ is apprehended, is man's "being drawn to the Father" by the Father.³³⁶

Faith alone appropriates justification. Luther's autonomy of the will to faith is the divine freedom of the will, of Christ, in the believer, and as such it is self-fulfillment of the divine Law in the selfless instrument—man. This same autonomy of the will to faith was interpreted by Melanchthon as the free human will, upheld by the Holy Spirit, prescribing its own law in obedience to divine Law. Luther's faith is God's work (*Wirken*) in man, Melanchthon's is a fundamentally good work, a basic virtue, effected (*bewirkt*) by God. His Christian "freedom" was thus blended with heterogeneous motives which were foreign to Luther's autonomy of pure faith.

Luther believed that in this one thing, in the act of grace, God

alone works in us. He works without us; other things beyond this God effects with us and through us. This is clearly a God-monergistic conception of the work of regeneration. Melanchthon, a humanist almost the equal of Erasmus in universality, though unlike him in the self-confidence of sovereignty which dictated Erasmus' ambiguous, relativizing irony, was endowed with a serious, objective, dependent temper, tending to cling to authority and system. As a consequence, not all of that which Luther had liberated and which constitutes essentially a part of Luther's greatness, was understood by Melanchthon. And since Melanchthon organized the Evangelical Church, not all of Luther's positive work was incorporated. As a matter of fact, through Melanchthon, the *Praeceptor Germaniae*, Humanism penetrated Evangelical dogmatism.

The function of Luther's "conscience" is to declare guilty or free, to strike the heart with terror before the judgment of God, and to give assurance in love; it is the "dictate" of God in the heart. Melanchthon's "conscience" is "the practical syllogism in the intellect, in which the major premise is the Law of God, and the minor premise and conclusion are the application . . . according to the natural order established by God."³³⁷ Conscience is for Melanchthon a human faculty, incited by "God's Law," "the natural knowledge of God . . . implanted in mankind like the knowledge of numbers, knowledge which shows him the eternal norm corresponding to the order of the Divine Spirit."³³⁷ Clearly, here in Melanchthon, are the beginnings of a natural theology, a conception Luther denominated as falsehood.

Melanchthon sought to unite theology and science, religion and humanism, dogma and ethics, and thus, though his ethical teaching was oriented in the Decalogue, his *Loci Communes*, the first systematic theology of the Evangelicals, combined evangelical ethics with Aristotle. Aristotle invoked "natural rights and privileges," and Melanchthon recognized these "natural rights" as basic in the Decalogue as well. In this manner he rendered Luther's "aloneness with God" conformable to reason by including those characteristics, which form the foundation of a humanistic Christianity.

Melanchthon's organizational talent was decisive in the German

school system from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, and it also served as a model for the Jesuits. Melanchthon, with the German humanists, aspired to the realization of a Christian Humanism, and to that end built the schools and universities with the help of the philosopher of Scholasticism, Aristotle. Latin had to be learned, and its elegant use; Greek too, so that the New Testament might be read in the original. Melanchthon wrote text books for schools and universities: a Greek grammar, a Latin grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, theology, ethics, physics, and psychology. He fostered the study of jurisprudence and of world history. He was an organizer, not an original genius.

2. Zwingli

Ulrich Zwingli, 1484-1531, the Swiss Protestant reformer, most clearly set forth his divergence from the spirit of his opponent in the Marburg debate with Luther. Luther's conviction of con-substantiation, of the actual presence of Christ in the wafer and wine in the Lord's Supper, disagreed with Zwingli's symbolic interpretation. In 1534 Luther still lamented this disunity. He would gladly give his life to bring about accord. "But how am I to do it? No doubt they are in good conscience captive to the one understanding; therefore we shall gladly suffer them; if they are sincere, Christ our Lord will surely save them. On the other hand, I am truly in good conscience captive to the other understanding, unless it be that I do not know myself; and they in turn suffer my belief although they can not accept it."³³⁸

In his debate with Zwingli Luther was willing to let the question as to whether Christ is present in the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper "actually," or only "in the memory of men" rest upon its own merits. Luther believed that the true flesh and blood of Christ is present, though invisible, "not in the form but in the same Being." For Luther religion has to do with Reality, not with symbols, as Zwingli believed; with facts, not with imagination. The Redeemer as He appeared in history is here; He is not an image of our fantasy, not a rational analysis, not a fiction of our memory. There is therefore no deeper interpretation of Holy Communion than: Christ is present.

Luther's "You are of a different spirit" was true. The difference lies in the conception of the Spirit: to the one the Spirit is an actuality, to the other the Spirit exists in the abstract. It is the contrast represented by Athanasius and Arian; Alexandria and Antioch; German Idealism and the Age of Enlightenment; Luther and Zwingli. The question is: Is the finite capable of receiving the infinite, or must they remain apart? Is the Divine to be thought of concretely in its becoming Reality or abstractly as "being in itself"? Is the Godhead in actuality present in history from the beginning to the end, or does it have its being in the human mind, reason, or imagination only?

Zwingli's political activity in the Swiss Republic, the Aristotelianism and Stoicism which his study of Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus discovered and found so engaging, his obligation to Erasmus, his absorption in pagan-antique sources and their indiscriminate interfusion with biblical material, served to produce a Christianity in which classical rationalism recurrently intermingles with Christian super-rationalism. Zwingli built on the theology of St. Paul, but he appealed to the intellect and outer reality. Humanistic intellectualism and clear logic determined his antithetical style. And it is quite understandable then that Zwingli was convinced, for instance, that God does not expect man to believe in the incomprehensible. Certainly such a view differed from Luther's as well as from Melancthon's. Nonetheless he was greatly influenced by Luther and agreed with him in large areas of religious belief.

Zwingli's was essentially a faith in Divine Providence, which was defined in Aristotelian and other classical terms: "absolute Being," "the Infinite," "First Mover," "Entelechy," "Goodness," "Power," "Wisdom." He divided the Person of Christ into the divine and the human; but Luther insisted that he was thus creating two persons where there is only one person in one Being. Luther's contention was that both natures are bound to a living unity in one person. Luther thus invested the human side of Christ with its full prerogatives, and this marks a significant progress over and against the old, orthodox Christology.

Zwingli makes all things a symbol of God's Being. They are not God—that would be pantheism—they signify God. Evil is the symbolic, God-effected contrast to good. Man learns to

know God in His Law, in the “thou shalt,” “thou shalt not,” the positive and negative symbols of good and evil. Predestination is a sign of divine benevolence, rejection the symbol of divine justice, and both betoken divine goodness. The Holy Spirit secures faith and salvation in the chosen one and thereby renders possible a continually progressive sanctification.

With Luther and Melancthon however, Zwingli rejected the scholastic point of view that man knows God by nature. To Zwingli, as to Luther, the Incarnation of Christ is the final and most profound revelation of perfect love. Man's complete dependence upon God and his complete salvation are here made clear. This is true religion, that man surrenders to God wholly, because he trusts His goodness. He the Creator of all things, alone possesses all things and shares them without recompense. But God requires that man, His co-worker and His instrument, perform great and difficult things with Him. For God will not suffer that he, whose heart He has drawn to Himself, be idle. Predestined, the believer is secure, and he carries out His beneficent and almighty will. The emphasis upon election rather than rejection makes Zwingli's Christianity a simple, joyously active one.

Calvin

Jean Calvin, 1509-1564, French Protestant reformer, imbued with French city culture and humanistic training, student of philosophy and law, turned to the Evangelical theology of Luther around 1533. Throughout life he expressed gratitude to Luther, whom he never met, for having awakened him to the consciousness of a reformed Christianity. His zeal concentrated upon the study of theology, the Bible, the Church Fathers, and Church history. In 1534 he broke with the Roman Church. Persecution in France exiled him and he fled to the German city Strassburg, then to Basel. In 1536 he went to Geneva where he published his *Institutio Religionis Christianae* for clergy and laymen. In systematic exposition he formulated a clear statement of Reformed dogmatics. Though Calvin pursued his own course in this theology, he always thought of himself as continuing in the direction set by Luther.

Like Ignatius Loyola of the Counter-Reformation, Calvin be-

longed to the form-conscious second generation of the Reformation; he was concerned with setting up a complete system of doctrine, and his *Institutes of Christian Theology* did not only that, but created a new type of constitution and church discipline by the introduction of presbyters and a body of deacons. In contrast with this Reformed Protestantism, Luther's trust in the religious instincts of the layman proposed no program, for his concern had to do with an intensely personal struggle fought out in an eager and searching soul.

Calvin was banished from Geneva in 1538; he went to Basel, then to Strassburg, where he spent three fruitful years. In 1541 he returned to Geneva. He knew the two Swiss reformers, Zwingli in Zurich, Oecolampad in Basel, and the German Martin Bucer in Strassburg. In the essentials of his doctrine Calvin is furthest removed from Zwingli, though in outward form and organization he resembles him most nearly. Zwingli's is a joyous trust in God, he takes pleasure in the world and in antiquity. Calvin's Scriptures are the Book of Law rather than glad tidings. The Law of God is therefore central for him, and with it a discipline and a moralism exhortative and austere as the Old Testament. With a sword of fire he battled for the Lord Most High, and in apocalyptic language his flaming anger flashed words of dire prophecy.

Political and religious chaos in Geneva called upon Calvin's rigor to establish order and obedience to the Law of God. He imposed strict discipline and restraint not only in the congregation he organized, but in civil affairs as well. The sixteenth century looked to temporal government to protect and support obedience to the Mosaic Code, to foster the glory of God, and to afford aid in the salvation of men's souls, not as a substitute for worldly authority, but as a complement to it. For nine years before his death Calvin was the regent in Geneva in spiritual and secular capacity. He did not however set up a theocracy. His profane government did not recognize God's immediate sovereignty in mundane affairs nor did it receive His revelation as its civil law. Calvin did not think of his regnancy as a direct government by God, for to him Church and state were not identical.

However, here in Geneva, on the borders of Romance and Germanic peoples, he obligated himself to the conversion of a whole political unit of citizens into religious disciples of Christ, he aspired to instil, even enforce an enduring fealty to the Christian faith, to exact most stringent observance of moral demand and conduct, to arouse to awareness of social needs in the congregation and community, to urge to the duty of love and charity, to incite to diligence in daily toil. In short, Calvin's Christian was to live a life which gave proof of his election to the kingdom of Christ.

This required a rigorous subjection to the letter of God's commandments and submission to them simply because they are His commands. That the members of his Church might be directed without fail to holiness and godliness, Calvin resolved to regulate their lives to the last detail. To this end his Geneva congregation established a regulatory spiritual jurisdiction, which arrogated to itself the prerogative of prying into the believer's life in a manner almost as imperious as any method the medieval Church was wont to employ. If one were inclined to attach blame and censure to such a procedure it might be well to call to mind that Calvin was the single stay and support of the Reformed Churches now struggling for existence in scattered parts of Europe. Political forces were mustering strength to subdue the new movement of faith; Loyola and his Order of Jesuits were moving in swift advance and striking vigorously at Protestantism everywhere. In the areas where the Reformed faith took hold, Calvin and his Church had to carry the burden of spiritual and political responsibility alone.

THE SOVEREIGN GOD

Calvin's religious experience is dominated by the majestic God, Creator, Lord, and King of the world. He is the Sovereign, upon whose unsearchable will and almighty power all creatures depend, to whom all humankind must ineluctably submit. God's righteous will to power is "the cause of all things"; and that He created them, upholds and governs them, constitutes His glory and majesty. "God rightfully requires that each creature serve Him, extol His might, lift up his eyes to His exaltedness and

obediently acknowledge Him Lord and King.”³³⁹ “God is infinite wisdom, justice, goodness, mercy, truth, power, and eternal life, in such manner that outside Him there is no other wisdom, justice, goodness, mercy, truth, power, or life.”³⁴⁰ He is the almighty, omniscient, just, and merciful Creator: “Our Creator, Lord, and Father, to whom . . . is due glory, honor, love.”³⁴⁰ “Above all we must know . . . that everything in heaven and earth . . . was created by Him for the sake of His glory.”³³⁹ The glory of God is the majesty of God, it is the glorification of God, the affirmation that He is God.

Calvin’s majestic God is first the just Judge who is the sovereign Law-giver, invested with and conscious of His majesty; only in the second place does He also rule over His creatures as a dear Father. His righteousness precedes His mercy, and His wisdom precedes both. “That which is called God’s grace is really His righteousness, for righteousness is His nature.”³³⁹ And “God provided for man’s salvation in such a manner, that He, not forgetful of self, gives to His glorification the foremost place, indeed, He created the whole world to the purpose that it too should be the scene of His majesty; not as if He were not sufficient unto Himself or needed to borrow [glory] from elsewhere, but that He vouchsafed to His creatures the honor that He imprint on them the sign [dependency upon Him and subjection to His will] of His sovereignty.”³⁴¹

Calvin, the intellectualist, endowed with a mind of juristic temper and training, was thus the protagonist of sovereignty as an all-determining doctrine, and the tenets known as “the fall of man,” “election,” “predestination,” but fortify it. God made a covenant with man in which He promised life to Adam and his posterity upon condition of perfect obedience; but by his fall man placed himself outside that covenant and a second was made, the “covenant of grace.” And in this covenant with His chosen people, God manifests His sovereignty as Jehovah, the eternal, almighty God. Out of His “mere good pleasure”³⁴² and love, “for the manifestation of His glory” and “for the praise of His divine grace,” God, by an eternal and immutable decree, “elected some angels to glory and in Christ chose some men to eternal life.” And again, “according to His sovereign power and the

unsearchable counsel of His own will [whereby He extends or withholds favor as He pleases],” He “fore-ordained the rest to dishonor and wrath,” “to everlasting death,” “to the praise and glory of His justice.” The tenet whereby the King of Kings elects the believer to the congregation of Israel: “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,” and the other: “whomsoever He will not save is predestined to the fate of the eternally damned,” spring not only from an antecedent knowledge of the piety of some and the godlessness of others, but, according to an inscrutable decree He chooses some and rejects others in order by this means to “induce man to glorify Him.” The doctrine of predestination holds this double aspect since God is both Judge and Father. “The Lord, therefore, may give grace to whom He will, because He is merciful, and yet not give it to all because He is a just judge; He may manifest His free grace, by giving to some what they never deserve, while, not giving to all, He declares the demerit of all.”³⁴³

In the “Considerations” compiled together with Melanchthon and Bugenhagen in 1536, that is, three years before Calvin elaborated in greater detail upon the idea of predestination incipient in Luther and Bucer, Luther expressed the opinion that such words as “election,” “predestination,” bring about vain “doubt, security, or despair. If you are chosen, no sin can really harm you, for you continue in grace . . . If you are not chosen, nothing will avail. These are terrifying words and it is a mistake to instruct the heart in such thoughts. The Gospel directs us to the express Word of God, which reveals God’s will through which He wishes to be known and to work. It is manifest, that the Word of God punishes sin, informs of the gravity of sin, and conducts us to the Saviour Christ. We are to turn to this expressed Word and to judge thereby whether we are in a state of grace . . . Wherever there is faith, whereby we are justified, there must also be good conscience. It is wholly unthinkable that the two things, faith which trusts in God, and evil intent, or as it is called, a bad conscience, should abide side by side. Faith and supplication to God are delicate things, and a most subtle wound of conscience may easily thrust out faith and worship . . . In sum, the teaching [of the Gospel] requires of us: the love of

a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith without blemish."³⁴⁴ We are not commanded to ask whether or not we are chosen, it is enough to know that whoever perseveres in contrition and faith is surely of the elect. Luther felt, that human reason here composed an inequitable will of God, as if God were a tyrant, who chooses companions pleasing to Him, be they good or not good, and on the other hand regards others with aversion and malice, no matter what they do.

The thought of predestination included for Calvin that from all eternity and before Creation, God, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordained whatsoever comes to pass; thus also the fall of man and therewith salvation in part and damnation in part. Yet thereby He is not the author of sin. "I confess, indeed, that all the descendants of Adam fell by the divine will into that miserable condition, in which they are now involved; and this is what I asserted from the beginning, that we must always return at last to the sovereign determination of God's will, the cause of which is hidden in Himself."³⁴⁵ He is the Sovereign, and dominion over life and death must be granted Him as Creator and Savior; for His is the power and the glory, and He will not be deprived thereof. Calvin's theology thus exalts the Sovereign Judge. Sovereignty is associated predominantly with the Old Testament conception of a stern and unyielding God. But though Calvin's stringent classicism emphasized the Lawgiver, he was aware too that the greatest of the prophets and psalmists proclaimed a faith which in Christ draws near to God the Father, a faith which exalts in the human sonship of all to Him.

In his definition of sin Luther stressed man's wilfulness and the total estrangement from God expressed in it — sin is godlessness. For Calvin sin is original corruption, whereby man is utterly indisposed and "made opposite to all good": sin is ungodliness, impiety, selfishness, pride, a debasement of God's majesty. The work of grace, as Calvin interpreted it, is clearly God-monergistic, as with Luther. Faith is the alone instrument of justification and is a free gift of God's grace, to the end that both His exact justice and rich grace may be glorified.

The Law and the Gospel are from the point of view of the "elect in Christ" a unity, basic in Calvin's theocentric conception.

of the process of salvation. As in Luther, the glory of God is the touchstone of the ultimate purpose of salvation, rather than man's redemption. Christians must acknowledge "not only their Redeemer Christ as the one king, they must be governed by the one law of freedom alone—the Holy Word of the Gospel—if they would retain the grace which they once received in Christ."³⁴⁶ Calvin makes the Decalogue, "the Law of perfect righteousness," the "Law of the Lord" the criterion of the "good" life. It must be obeyed.

His doctrine of predestination sets forth that none can win salvation by means of pious works. It incites to a conduct becoming "a chosen one." He who is elected to God's kingdom attempts to live according to biblical precepts, even though perfection in this world is impossible. God's decrees and laws spring from His righteousness, therefore this tenet spurs to ethical activity, increases the sense of ethical responsibility and dedicates life to the glory of God. Calvin was not arrested first and foremost by Luther's God of love, but by the certainty of man's total depravity in the face of God's dominating will and omnipotence. To be sure, Calvin's God is also the God of the New Testament, who accepts in grace. However, his conception of grace bears strong resemblance to ethical duty, and love of our fellow men implies self-denial rather more definitely than the communion of joyous, rapturous strength as in Luther's analysis.

Calvin therefore placed strong emphasis upon God's demand of blind obedience to His absolute will, decisive in all things in a manner inexplicable to man. Every doubt and any trace of natural self-confidence blaspheme God's majesty. Life must be an active service of God; but this activity at times assumes the rigid, harsh character of a hard battle fought for the superior forces of God. The principles of God's sovereignty and predestination determine man's relation to man also, and may provide the religious foundation for an austere intolerance of "the enemies of God." Dedication to His glory, to the "right service of God," is man's calling in this world and the ethical task of the believer.

MUNDANE LIFE

Luther and Calvin agreed that the world must be overcome in the world, that good works are the fruits of faith, not its

essence. Despite his severity, Calvin permitted the faithful some joy in this world. With Luther he agreed that art, music, song, and learning are not to be despised. This rigorous logician, however, distinctly in contrast with Luther, submitted that upon the death of the body the souls of the elect will "see . . . the future reward in the distance, and they will rest in the certain expectation of the blissful resurrection, because they know that God is merciful to them."³⁴⁷ And this motive of reward for the effort on behalf of God's glory was also accepted for our mundane existence — as a "help in our weakness."

In his views on marriage, Luther, freeing man's natural urge from suspension in the state of celibacy, raised marriage to a place of honor. In his view the chief function of marriage was the promotion of chastity, and the bringing up of children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" — that more souls might be brought to God. Calvin did not see in marriage a "medicine against sin," as did Luther, but admitted it exclusively as a means of propagation. English Puritanism later built on this basis, and in its extreme form suppressed all manner of sense enjoyment.

Calvin's authority, however, whatever the problem, was the Bible. The infallible rule of interpretation of the Holy Scriptures is Holy Writ itself. It is manifest that it is the Word of God because of its "majesty and purity," because of the scope of the whole.

THE STATE

As Calvin's Church was a covenant Church, thus his conception of the state rests on the mutual duty between king and people. The king is subject to the will and desire of the King of all Kings, whose commands he is to obey and perform. God is the sovereign, the God of all law and order. And Christ alone, the rule and measure of faith, is the foundation of Church and state. The government obligates itself to protect and foster God's glory, to care for the righteous and to promote the good of all. The subject, on the other hand, agrees to obedience "if the king demands service in warfare, imposes taxes, and the like."³⁴⁸ For the "authority of the government derives from God" and He "rules the governments of this world in this fashion: He wills that there be

kings, princes, functionaries, and men distinguished because of their dignity, whose duty it is to preside over the others, to carry the sword and wield it as God has commanded them." And the "Lord declares: be they as they will, they have their power and authority from Him"³⁴⁹ and they must be obeyed.

Not only governments, but nature and natural law depend upon His mighty will. As He is greater than His creation, so He is greater than the natural law which He implanted in the soul of man. In order to prove His superiority to the seemingly immutable lawfulness in natural phenomena, and, in order to preclude the possible assumption that natural law proceeds from itself, God now and then indulges His whim by bringing to pass an arbitrary variation in nature's functioning. In like manner He sometimes transcends the interdiction of a "natural law" as: "Thou shalt not kill" and the natural duty to guarantee and protect human life implied in this law. For instance, God hailed the Levites through Moses as "the true workers in the service of God" when they slew their idolatrous brethren and spared nothing. And so it comes about that "natural law" may be forced to retreat before the "divine right" delegated to the government by the Lord over life and death. Granting this aberration demonstrative of God's sovereignty, nonetheless, Calvin sternly demanded that laws promulgated by the government be based on the Law of the Decalogue, and that deviation therefrom be permitted only according to God's precepts.

Calvin's political thinking was biblical. The political community, the state was thought of as the congregation of Christ, established by God not simply as a bulwark against man's corruption, but that His plan of salvation be furthered. God made a covenant with His chosen ones and He extends it to apply to their political duties and relations. Since Calvin's definitions of civil law and the state are derived from his theology, they rest upon the concept of the sovereignty of God; upon the doctrine of divine predestination; and upon the tenet of divine justice. His emphasis — and let it be understood, this emphasis is not exclusive — underlines God's omnipotence rather than His love; the election of the community and congregation rather than the justification of the individual; the Judge and His judgment rather than redeeming

grace. All in all, whatever the state possesses, comes from God, He is the King and His commandments are law. He uses the state to execute His plan, and that constitutes its purpose and its dignity.

Christian freedom implies political freedom, for God is the Supreme Ruler. Therefore the government is in duty bound to create a Christian manner of life. But the right to active resistance to it inheres in the constitutionally appointed authorities only, the representatives of the people, those of rank, magistrates in so far as the practice of law is entrusted to them. Private persons may not attack a ruler, not even a tyrant. Wherever acquiescence involves disobedience to God, wherever authority offends against God's Law, however, the individual must stand firm against the government and refuse to obey. Calvin distinguished between divine and human law, as did Luther, therefore he can counsel disobedience to a government encroaching upon divine commands. However, since Calvin was convinced that authority resides in the law, and since natural law and the order of Creation were practically identical for him, since, as Calvin saw it, natural law and moral law virtually coincide in establishing justice, revolt against natural law—the foundation of the state—signifies in principle rebellion against God and nature.

The concept of the "sovereignty of the people" as taught by the pre-Reformation Manegold von Lautenbach occurred to neither Calvin nor Luther. In Calvin's opinion the foundation of governmental authority was not the people, for all rights and all power remain with God, and all rulers are the "instruments of His might . . . God is the eternal King, men are nothing."³⁵⁰

Nonetheless, Calvin's theological tenet that supreme authority resides in the Law of God as revealed in Christ, found political expression in the modern concept of state. Calvin insists that the Law is greater than any power on earth, and every ruler is bound by it. The state, founded upon natural law, draws its validity and authority from the law; and the law defines the principle of fundamental natural rights. No rightful government may assert self-determined authority. The government is rather in duty bound to exercise, maintain, and administer justice and to protect the basic rights inherent in natural rights. The axiom that "might

must serve the right" accurately describes and circumscribes the intent of constitutional monarchy and opposes forever the pronouncement of the later Hobbes, that "might makes right."

Furthermore, Calvin considered the community a Christian brotherhood before God, charged with a duty and responsibility one to the other under the sovereignty of God. The Reformed teaching that the congregation of believers whose Lord is none other than Christ, is by His grace also a political communion, by implication resuscitated the concept of the sovereignty of the people, awakened in late antiquity and astir in the early Middle Ages. The religious authentication of this thought by Calvinism undoubtedly bequeathed and assured a deeper effectuality and a more enduring ethical obligation than did the contributions of eighteenth century enlightenment.

The Protestant Churches first influenced by Calvin were those of Geneva and of the Huguenots in France. But the ascendancy of Calvinism was realized in its purest forms through John Knox, 1505-1572, Scottish theologian and founder of the Presbyterian Church; through the clergymen and laymen of the Puritan revolution in England; and through the Pilgrim founders and Puritan moralists in New England. The Presbyterian Church is the direct heir of Calvinism in doctrine and polity. John Knox withdrew his Church from the control of the king and bishops and put it into the hands of the ministers and the people. Puritanism, beginning early in the reign of Elizabeth, had by 1567 developed into small groups of lay rigorists meeting secretly in London to worship after the pattern of the service of the Church in Geneva. Puritanism and Presbyterianism are not interchangeable terms. Presbyterianism favored central church government; the parish was the unit of the Puritan Church. Another group, the so-called Independents, advocated Congregationalism, that is, the Church was defined as an autonomous congregation of believers; this rule was introduced by the Puritan Robert Browne among the Dissenters from the Church of England. In the Netherlands the Protestant Church was Presbyterian in government, but not independent of the state until the middle of the nineteenth century. From the principles of faith of these Reformed groups came the "glorious revolution" in England, accomplished in a political

emergency having religious foundation, the political uprising in Holland arising from a religious crisis, the power of resistance of the French Huguenots, and of the Scottish and English Calvinists. And even the war for independence in the American colonies was in its essential character not too far removed from Calvin's consciousness of divinely established natural rights. Calvinism, it is clear, promoted the cause of civil liberties.

From their inception Reformed congregations had to maintain their position in battle. They were forced to develop a political practice in consonance with their religious faith. Compelled to unite in self-defense, they were also under the necessity of seeking international solidarity. In this critical period they accumulated a rich store of religious-ethical principles designed to serve as a guide for common political action. Thus the idea of political freedom and the responsibility of the layman retained religious significance in the constitutions of predominantly Calvinistic countries. And this included and includes a feeling for man's natural rights, respect for life, and a sense for true humanity in every man.

These early Reformed Protestant groups were imbued with a spirit that begot strength and fortitude, that spurred to self-discipline and an ethical manner of life, that sought plainness and humility in the knowledge that to be is more than to seem, that was active in an unrelaxed endeavor to bear witness to the rule of Christ and to extend it in the world. They were strong upholders of freedom of conscience; they evinced an inflexible strictness in faith, an unwavering scrupulousness in religion and morals. The religious convictions which were translated into and made operative in the Reformed Protestant political world and society were derived from Calvin's certitude that the freedom of the individual, spiritual and political, comes from God and is responsible before God; that respect is due the inherent dignity of every man, for he is our brother in Christ; that all are equal before the law and before divine justice, the source and foundation of all law.

Calvin's ideal state was an aristocratic-democratic republic, patterned after the organization of his Church. By contrast Lutherism was aristocratic and not at all averse to retention of that of the

old which its experience might call good. While Zwingli engaged in politics and Calvin did not hesitate to use force in the promotion of his cause, Luther declined to confuse the temporal with the eternal. His magnificent trust in God was certain that God would lead his spiritual cause to victory spiritually, and he condemned the use of force in religious things and insisted that his Church persecute no one.

Both Calvinism and Lutherism leaned toward the strengthening of the national state so long as it obeyed the Word. And both Calvin and Luther appealed to the middle classes and fostered rising capitalism. Calvin's Bible commends diligence and toil, and Luther's biblical proclamation of personal freedom and the consecration of the tasks of daily life dignifies the work of husbandman and artisan. Work and thrift together built modern capitalism.

LUTHER AND CALVIN

Calvin was a mature thinker when he adopted Protestantism, and his decision entailed persecution, suffering, and exile. He finally found a refuge in Geneva. Luther defied pope, emperor, death: but the protection of Saxony's princes secured him safety in Wittenberg. Increasing trust and support soon made him Germany's strongest figure and his doctrine spread at home and into the Scandinavian countries. Calvin grew powerful because he established that Reformed type of Protestantism which played so important a role in France, the Netherlands, and England, sea powers bent at this time upon a course of expansion and colonization.

For Luther the God of love and grace stressed in the Gospel begets individual piety, a life of peace, and an inner spontaneity and dedication to the good. Utterly confident of God's love, the Christian yields himself to Him, and from this yielded faith issues a deep trust in men's impulses. Calvin's God, just and sovereign, demands a Christian life of holiness in obedience to His Law, and this in turn requires a Church for the regulation of Christian conduct. The power of the Law imposed from without is ever present with him. Luther, more idealistically than Calvin, extols the

purely inward power of God and entrusts man's daily conduct to its potency and direction. He does not formulate a detailed church constitution, he waives all guarantees constraining the government. Calvin, less spiritual, but more worldly-wise, organizes to do battle with the government on the basis of principles drawn from the Bible, more frequently from the Old Testament than from the New. Luther's personal faith builds on the individual conscience — the indwelling Christ; He needs neither plan nor coercion, therefore Luther confidently relinquishes all to Him who endows with inward freedom and strength.

Calvin's was a corporate conception and he reaffirmed the medieval supremacy of the Church as an institution. The living Christ is and remains "the alone Lord" in Church and state. Luther, believing in man and trusting in his goodness, fostered free social action undertaken voluntarily, spontaneously. Calvin stressed coercive "governmental" action applied with "police" power, if necessary. Luther realized that the divine in man can not be bounded. The freedom of a Christian is a super-stately, super-confessional, super-churchly actuality and ideality; it is incapable of organization or rules, glorious and quickening, life-giving to the soul, incomprehensible, and illimitable. Luther's free Christian is not a man of ceremony, but one of inner discipline, a master of all things through faith, and yet humble before all through love, zealous in service to others, a happy, free, courageous child of God.

Calvinism resolved the deeds of God's activity into single, disconnected, autocratic acts of will which do not emanate from an absolute causality and uninterrupted oneness, and are bound by no inner necessity or metaphysical unity of substance. As a consequence the single act, the particular, was stressed, the factual. Judgment assumed a more practical and impromptu character. That the Anglo-Saxon mind inclines to empiricism may find its origin here. Luther's concepts on the other hand were basic in German metaphysics from Leibniz to Kant, Schelling, Hegel: they are built on a surmised unity and continuity of things, on an inner rationality and compactness in the nature of God, on the felt presence of God in the heart, mind, temper, and soul of man, and in His Creation.

PROTESTANTISM—A SUMMARY

Protestantism is primarily a religious force. It is dedicated to a religion arising in inmost religious probing and prevailing; it became a cultural force only in so far as cultural life was drawn into it and determined by it. By indirection Calvinism went the way of democracy and capitalism; it was fertile soil for ascetic Puritanism, pure Anabaptism, Methodism, Adventism, and the Salvation Army. Lutherism turned to metaphysical speculation, it begot Neo-Mysticism, Quakerism, Pietism and achieved a wide tolerance for the abundance of convictions, the many denominations and forms which individualism devised for the need of the sole self in its approach to God. Both Lutherism and Calvinism, finding redemption a free gift of God and good works or conduct of no avail in the winning of salvation, did as a matter of fact prove to be an enormous stimulus to morality and piety, simply because men as individual persons became God-conscious.

Though Protestantism as such, having disenthralled Christian life from a thousand-year old tradition, appeared toward the end of the century as stereotyped dogmatism, bristling with a new Scholasticism, it remains to this day a prodigious force. Even if the individual became more and more a private individual none too absorbed in national life, Protestantism nonetheless continued triumphant on its way. It had asked men to examine their beliefs. And Luther had demanded popular education so that men might learn to know "the truth." His influence and that of his followers created the village school, the upper and middle class gymnasia, which in the course of time made Germany a nation superior in literacy and learning. Melanchthon's scholarly talent exerted a direct influence on science and letters, through him the study of Greek was given a permanent place in university instruction. All Protestant lands except England provided at least elementary schooling for their children in this century.

In countless ways Protestantism transformed life and laid the foundation for the new culture dominant through the centuries that follow. It is well to remember, however, that Protestantism had a future only because it did not wholly annul the past. Despite all inwardness Luther, and with him Calvin, used "the Book" and

insisted that "the Word shall remain." The new draws upon the old, and the "Word," beyond its mystical and humanistic meaning, was for them the source of truth.

In the end the reformatory revolt separated most of Germany, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, England, Scotland, much of the United States — in the main, nations of the Germanic race, — from the Church of Rome. This liberation meant that the allegiance of the Christian was transferred from the Church to the Bible, now the rule and standard of faith. The great Romance nations, France, Spain and its colonies, Italy, together with parts of Bavaria, Austria, Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, South Ireland, adhered or in time returned to the old loyalty. So pervasive, however, was the influence of the Reformation that by the middle of the century the omnipotence of the Roman hierarchy was broken, spiritually as well as politically.

THE COUNTER-REFORMATION

The Roman Church, however, evinced its indestrucible staying power in that it too experienced a reformation. This reform had its beginning in Italy and was consummated when a semi-paganized papacy at last submitted to it in mid-century. Its chief propulsion however came from Spain, where an astonishingly strong capacity for religious revival was lodged; where pre-antique, antique, Semitic, African, and Germanic elements coalesced; where a form of Romanism more or less independent of the papacy had been nurtured during the Middle Ages, and on whose Mediterranean shores remnants of the Greco-Roman stream of enlightenment had remained alive. The regeneration tied to this rationalistic spirit. The seat of ancient and Moorish civilization had been established from 711 to 1492 in the southern provinces of Spain. And here, where now, after eight centuries of skirmishing warfare against the Saracens, the crescent was finally lowered from the turrets of the Alhambra at Granada; where the Crusaders' fanatical zeal had not yet perished and monkish-clerical ardor was willing to risk its all for the honor of the Church, here, in this Spain, the so-called Counter-Reformation had its origin. The protagonist for this Roman Catholic reformation was Igna-

tius Loyola, 1491-1556, Spanish soldier and priest; he was compelled by an energy, which, because his Basque country had lain spiritually dormant for centuries, was the more concentrated and intense in its cumulative vigor.

Thus the new resoluteness injected into the prostrate tenets of the Roman Church arose not originally from the general disposition of the Church, but it was rather the subjective and personal accomplishment of Loyola. After inquisitorial incarcerations in Spain and persecutions in Rome, he finally obtained the confirmation of his Order of the Jesuits in 1540. Romanism was already reaching the lower strata of society through the sermons of the mendicant friars, members of the Franciscan Order of the Capuchins, founded in Italy in 1526. Now the kindled zealotry of Jesuitism discovered the life of Jesus to be the ideal. It stressed legends of saints, emphasized ascetism of every kind—it practiced a religious separatism which appeared heretic and evoked the suspicions of the Inquisition. Men of a new calibre were the bearers of Roman Christianity now, and they fashioned not only an ascetic spirituality, but they aroused a militant ardor. And it was soon apparent that the function of the Society of Jesus was to serve the *ecclesia militans*. In keeping with the dual direction of the age, it developed a deeper inwardness and asserted a wider secularism than that of any previous order.

A new "officers' corps" was created, individual competition was spurred, the clergy was reformed, and the study of the Bible was made compulsory; the level of culture was raised, a more personal and practical method of pastoral care was effected; sermon, confession, learning, and missionary zeal were fostered. In the century of High-Renaissance, so intent on secularization, Loyola held address in the art of disputation and diplomacy at a premium. He was convinced that sagacity with less saintliness was worth more than choice saintliness with less sagacity.

This was voiced in that Spain which, immediately upon the discovery of the western hemisphere by Columbus, had begun to pour a stream of adventurers and colonists in search of fame and fortune into those parts of the new lands opened by Spanish exploration and conquest. The Spanish cavalier engaged in brilliant exploits in these early decades of daring and adventure, and aided

his home in the building of a greater Spain in the New World. And though knighthood and chivalry had become meaningless elsewhere in Europe, Spain was ripe for it and expressed it with its own characteristic fervor: be it in its explorations, be it in the *hidalgo*, this lesser nobleman, bearer of an ethos of adventure and gallantry hardly any longer associated with real life, be it in the Jesuit, whose feats of chivalry were the deeds of the spiritual crusader.

Loyola knew the dangerous predilection of the Spanish fantasy to roam and to adventure in the world of the strange, whimsical, and the impassioned, and this inclination had to be restricted and directed. Severe military discipline had to endue the individual with the strength to annihilate will and emotions. In his *Exercitium Spirituale*, this castigation of self and source of religious ecstasy, Loyola united strong passion with an equally strong, but tempered intellect. Thoughts, emotions had to be controlled, and that demanded an ability arbitrarily to evoke them and as readily to banish them. Therefore the neophyte in these spiritual exercises bared every thought, every impulse to his director. In this manner the ardor of faith was stimulated and a genuinely chivalrous act was engendered which, however, submitted to absolute hieratic obedience. It might be concerned with this world as well as with the spiritual, and by the subtle manipulation of the Order this exercise might be directed toward diverse areas of secular domination. Loyola's vision made all the world the scene of his truly imposing spiritual strategy, and plans included that missionaries be sent to the Far East as well as to the vast continents of the Americas.

Throughout his troubled rule Charles V, grandson of Maximilian I, who had come to oppose Germany in all its significant questions, who was unable to make this nation the nucleus of his political thinking, and unable to imbibe of the clear stream of the Reformation, had nonetheless nourished the hope that the Church of Rome and the Protestants might be brought together in a General Council, where their differences might be reconciled and the cherished unity of Christendom perpetuated. To be sure, the Dutch Adrian VI, whom Charles V had raised to the papacy, instituted reforms in the Church and at the Diet of Nürnberg con-

fessed to offenses within the Church. Endowed with a sense of responsibility, he was eager to discharge his duties as a Christian pope; but the cardinals scoffed at his naiveté, and death ended his two-year occupancy of the chair of St. Peter. Pope Paul III, who had excommunicated Henry VIII, who approved the Jesuit Order, acknowledged the fact of abuses in the Church by setting up a reform committee.

But Paul, fearful of the threat to his absolute control, fearful too of a surrender to Protestantism, resisted the Imperial demand until forced in 1542 to call the Council of Trent. It was adjourned before holding a single session. The second and third unsuccessful convocations of the same Council no doubt convinced Charles that he had failed. After his death the Council convened for the fourth and last time in 1562-63. It was this session which affirmed irreconcilably the rightness of the government, worship, and doctrines of the medieval Church, which reaffirmed that the history and traditions of the Roman Church conformed to God's will and law.

In 1538 Luther had promulgated the Smalkaldic Articles, a confession of the faith of the Reformation. A joyous confession. Here Luther set forth in how far the Evangelicals were willing to concede to the papacy, and to which articles of faith they were compelled conscientiously to adhere. Now the Council of Trent authoritatively, and in a manner admitting of no dispute or controversy, formulated the doctrines of the Roman Church, and rendered the division of Christianity definite and final by formally anathematizing Protestant opinion. The official compilation, *The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, constitutes the most complete statement of the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. At this Council of Trent a party of bishops still stood on the platform of conciliation, but their opponents, the papal party, Italian prelates assisted by the new champions of the Pope, the Jesuits, won a complete victory. Such was their strength that they almost achieved the proclamation of the doctrine of papal infallibility finally decreed in 1870. The Council of Trent created a clearly conceived ideal of priestly asceticism, a hierarchy of intellectual and spiritual consciousness, which has since been able to defy the storms of the centuries.

This Council decreed the formal purgation of the abuses in the Church; it centralized and strengthened papal supremacy; and it inaugurated officially the movement of opposition and reaction against both Renaissance and Reformation known as the Counter-Reformation. The Italian Renaissance and the German Reformation had aroused the forces of conservatism as early as 1530 at Bologna, where Pope Clement VII belatedly crowned the Emperor Charles V and the two agreed to maintain resolutely the principle of monarchial absolutism, which in turn was to be supported by papal absolutism and authority. This was a blow to the spiritual and emancipating ideals proclaimed by the Reformation and the Renaissance.

It is clear, Roman Catholicism and Protestantism had to clash, once secular powers were determined to realize their own religious systems, and once they pledged their political might to the existence and continuance of their particular faith. In the second half of the century they did clash, not as contenders in polemics and personal debate, as was Luther's way, but as pawns in religious wars waged with inhuman barbarity, implacable vengeance, conflagration, pillage, massacre, and assassination. The Counter-Reformation assumed significance especially in Romance countries. France had absorbed the earlier Renaissance and an Italianized spirit before the Reformation became a political actuality in the Huguenots. This fact, together with the strong Italian predisposition of the House of Valois, may to some degree explain how from the Counter-Reformation eventuated those fierce embroilments in civil wars, a massacre of St. Bartholomew, treasons, murders of the Guises, empoisonments, and regicides, which terminated only with the compromise of Henry IV, who relinquished his Protestant faith for the sake of founding the Bourbon dynasty in France.

By the end of the century the force inherent in the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation engaged in battle in the struggle of the revolted subjects in the Protestant Netherlands against the tyranny of Philip II of Spain. The Counter-Reformation launched the Spanish Armada against a Protestant England, and in that latter country brought about fitful terrorisms and bloodshed. It infiltrated into Germany, determined and confident, into an out-

wardly weakwilled, inwardly enervated Protestantism, divided by bitter quarrels concerning theological opinions. The personal religious experience of Luther had, in the hands of his successors, changed to orthodoxy and tradition.

Protestantism had become politically inferior to a rejuvenated Roman Catholicism. The Spanish Charles V had made the political recovery of Germany impossible and the Spanish Jesuit Order finally divided the Christian Church. Through the interference of Spanish politics that fearful European catastrophe, the Thirty Years' War, will in the next century become a reality. This war between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism will be fought in a Germany become defenseless, in that same Germany which in its strength and spiritual travail brought forth the Reformation.

RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION — A SUMMARY

The achievement of this century, bearer of so powerful an urge toward emancipation, was extraordinary. The Renaissance brought the rebirth of man into a newly discovered world, and in the Reformation man was reborn in God. Renaissance and Reformation sought to recover a good once possessed by man, but which had now become beclouded and corrupted. The Renaissance found it in the classical culture of antiquity. The Reformation came upon it in the salvation proclaimed by the Gospel. Renaissance-Humanism, positing happiness in a "perfection" achieved in the Here and Now, made culture the means and instrument of this supreme completeness. Renaissance-Humanism professed the belief that culture engenders refinement and taste, saves man from vulgarity, and from cupidity as well, wherever there is scrupulous loyalty to its assignment. Enlightenment develops receptivity and appreciation of aesthetic qualities in the world of senses; and the powers of emotion, mind, and sense, once trained, cultivated, and expanded, beget understanding, sympathy, and tolerance, and imbue with a sense of justice and a spirit of kindness. Culture in the sense of the Renaissance instills impassioned contemplation of the fine arts and literature, and added to that its Humanism takes delight in a system of ethics

and promotes conformity to moral ideals clearly defined and readily comprehended. The excellence of moral law is evidence of a high form of intellectual discipline, it is the test and distinction of religion, included too in the realm and function of the "perfect."

And yet, though Renaissance-Humanism may attain to moments lovely and enchanting: though beauty and reason be made the sole substance and goal of all aesthetic, philological, and historical pursuit; though aesthetic perfection put forth a new kind of meditation to calm the mind, rapt in the vision of the exquisite and choice in this world that is here and now; though reason, in its divine God-givenness, take spiritual direction and invite the troubled soul to flee to moral law as a light unto its path, a lamp unto its feet in its hour of destitution, there remains a need still unfulfilled beyond this rich fulfillment. There lingers a longing for something to cling to amid the perpetual flux of moment and appearance.

THE REFORMATION — A CONSUMMATION OF THE HOPE OF MAN

It is the need to see beyond the moment's evanescent glimpse, to apprehend, if it were but in a molecule of time, that truly inscrutable presence that endues with a peculiar tranquillity, poetic, yet more than that in inner peace and consecration. It is the longing to be immersed in the transforming radiance of Christ, consummate, plenteous in its smallest fragment, as nothing in Aristotle's subtlest logic. With this reborn Christianity there came a new gladness, came the feeling of an unfailing stay in Him, who imparts a new meaning to the world's inimitable array of beauty and its inexplicable mystery, who walks by our side, who shares in every stir of joy and sadness, and brings our every wish and thought into captivity to the freedom of a Christian man.

The soul no longer lives in fear and trembling, for there is a divine Presence at work within and in all things made by the Father of All, the Creator, whose everlasting arms are underneath; there is that divine Presence revealed in the Word, the Logos, once become actual and visible, actual and visible now through

the Spirit in and of Him. Here perfection is the capacity to surrender to the abiding and eternal in the moment, to be apprehended of that Grace, that Love which does not pass away. Here is a new hope, a love greater than the fear of death, a promise of life in time and eternity, whose bliss exceeds all thinking and imagining. Man's joy is made full in peace of heart, participant now in the divinity of Christ, who is the final consummation of all surmise and hopefulness of man. This is the supreme achievement of man's spiritual liberation and exaltation, the rebirth of Christianity wrought by the Reformation in the sixteenth century. A light now shines upon men's ways, a radiance resplendent in serenity and joyous freedom.

Thus the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mark the high point of religious interest among the common people of Europe—not the Middle Ages. For in Germany this sixteenth century had brought forth a preacher and teacher such as the world had seen in St. Paul and St. Augustine only, a Luther, whose preaching and teaching fired men's minds and hearts. For he passionately proclaimed that the grace of God was unto the simplest, the most humble among men. His extraordinary acumen, his power of speech exerted an unprecedented influence upon the high and the lowly alike. Here was a profound, ingenious, and gifted thinker and theologian, the mightiest prophet of his people, a religious genius of singular inwardness and sincerity. A man among men, he made clear that every man might now come to God as he was and know himself accepted. Every child of man might now trustingly walk with Him who loves him with an everlasting love and crowns him with glory and honor.

THE CENTURY IN RETROSPECT

This was the accomplishment of the intention and bold hope of all tearing at shackles too taut, of the brilliant daring that delivered world and man from the restrictions of the Middle Ages. Enraptured, tempestuous spirits set free from fetters that formerly encircled and restrained, they emancipated from compulsions too peremptory and binding: Luther from Rome, Bruno from the Church, Montaigne from all positive systems, Copernicus from

Ptolemy, Paracelsus from the canon of Avicenna, Machiavelli from Christian morality. Dissection, differentiation were at work everywhere, separating the state either from morals or from the universal Church; detaching nations from the loosened bonds of the universal Empire; founding firmly national speech and literature apart from the universal language; giving substance to faith beyond the confinement of the visible Church; distinguishing knowledge from faith; separating philosophy from theology, the sciences from philosophy, the arts and free occupations from Church and guild. Individualism set apart, classified: the Anabaptists divided the world into the redeemed and the lost; Calvin beheld sinful mankind as either chosen or rejected; Humanism's tabulation labeled men as either cultured and superior, or unlettered, plebeian, and scorned; innumerable sects sprang from the disunion in Protestantism.

Fervid and eager in its divisive work the century may appear on the whole light-hearted in its world-affirmation and world-acceptance. Nonetheless, the great religious struggles and tremors in the Church forced men to ponder life in the Here and the Beyond, compelled them to reflect on the relation of God to mortal man. To be sure, the assumption that everyone experienced the inner conflicts, the yearning, the awakening of the great personalities of the age, with equal intensity, is not tenable. The spiritual and mental wrestling of the inspired men of learning and of the representatives of God could not be common to all in like measure. Therefore the sensibility of the leaders of the sixteenth century finds no counterpart in the moralists who attempted to cleanse the age of its crudities by teaching what is good jocosely, nor in the moderation of its naively self-indulgent naturalism which would hinder what is evil forbearingly. The extraordinary genius of the age was concentrated in the work of the Reformation. The preaching of the Gospel in its simplicity aroused torpid consciences to response and quickened all men. There was no room for great literature. Luther offered a profound theology, but more than that; by his sermons he led to the fresh waters of the Gospel from which all who thirsted might drink. His message filled the first half of the century, and there was none even remotely of like stature to follow him. After him a decline in all

spheres was inevitable. More and more popular literature favored bombastic rhetoric, spiritless allegory; it turned to the romance of chivalry and filled volume upon volume. With the exception of the Volksbuch, *Dr. Faustus*, 1587, there is nothing in the literature that suggests the life and death struggle of the great men of the century.

Gluttony and extravagance in dress engrossed in ever larger measure; prolixity was rampant. As the century progressed, scholarly books became endlessly long, sermons offered a prodigality of hours of exhortation; festivals were interminable. Pageantry, fantastic and pedantic, designed to delight the eye, seemingly knew neither temperateness, nor did it ever end. Hearty laughter, jocularity abounded — altogether a scene indicative of joyousness and carefree happiness.

However, despite all the uproarious and robust life of pleasure it is clear its robustness was not one of unmixed joy. Oppressiveness intermingled with the piety of the age: the mystery of nature both fascinated and terrified. Astrology and alchemy instilled hope and fear, the ill omen of black magic and demons hovered near, sinister and mighty competitors for a trusting faith.

THE END OF THE CENTURY

Thus, little by little the free, totally developed personality, ennobled naturalness and moderation began to vanish. While German courts were still imitating the Italians in point of dignity and distinction, Romance peoples had already forsaken the Renaissance ideal, and were cultivating the ceremonious, heroic pose called *estilo culto*. German poetry maintained a certain vigor and independence in folk literature, *Choral*, *Volkslied*, and *Volksbuch*, but the last echoes of the romantic tones were slowly dying away. There was some lyrical quality in the objective form of the hymn, in the typifying nature images in the folk song. But toward its close the era could not bestir itself to subjective utterance, to the recapture of a purely lyrical mood in nature, to the phrasing of the transport of soul that is born of passionate and strong emotion, or to the ardent outreaching of the mind.

The century had not been able wholly to lay hold of and make

its own what its great genius had placed before it, that all-transforming truth which would build the kingdom of God here on earth. According to Melancthon, Luther shortly before his death expressed the hope that his family might not survive him long. "For such a terrifying chaos awaits Germany that there will be no place for honest people nor for serious study."³⁵¹ And one inadvertently recalls how well Goethe caught the anxiety of the hour when in the last scene of his play, *Götz von Berlichingen*, he has the dying Götz say: "Poor wife! I leave you in a corrupt world. . . . The days of deceit, commanding freely, are coming. The contemptible will rule with cunning, and the high-minded will fall into their nets."³⁵² Götz of the Iron Hand objected to the intrusion of the Roman Law and to the Renaissance court life so readily embraced by the new type of territorial rulers now in the ascendancy. As in the case of Götz, a tragic fate was the lot of those who persisted in the old customs, laws, and principles; likewise he fared ill who outwardly adapted himself to the new trends in the face of his deeper convictions and loyalties. Luther and Götz saw only the beginning of the days of trouble awaiting Germany. The Reformation had prodded the whole nation to a real concern for the welfare of every human soul. Indeed, there was a moment, around 1558, so historians estimate, when nine-tenths of the German-speaking peoples professed the Protestant faith.

But that which is in the process of coming into being is one thing, and that which has become is another. The substance of the religious riches of Luther's Reformation is not synonymous with post-Luther Protestantism. Few were ready for the freedom which the Reformation had won, which the Renaissance had laid before men. Whatever the old Church could offer had been rejected; the "truths of revelation," Luther's rediscovery and examination into man's condition when God confronts him, his calm assurance and unshaken trust in God's promises degenerated into a dismal and pedantic anxiety about the meaning of faith. The dignified and aristocratic statutes of Humanism languished and were degraded to sterile erudition. Endless controversies within Protestantism ensued, with the result that the generation following Luther felt itself driven to resort to an objective legalism.

This tendency to observe the strict letter rather than the spirit of the Law could have but one result: the very core of the meaning of Christianity, of the Christian religion was lost sight of. The doctrine of salvation by conformity to law, by righteous living, as distinguished from salvation by grace, was substituted for the authority and power of faith. As Luther had known, it is singularly difficult to transmit to others the living reality of religious experience, grace, faith, and the indwelling of the Spirit. Even Melanchthon appealed to natural law in establishing a guide for Christian living. His intellectualism soon turned the wondrousness of justification by faith into a static experience; scriptural utterances concerning the work of Christ were made valid because they could be objectively and intellectually accepted. If Melanchthon, so close to Luther, could not rightly comprehend the meaning of Luther's religious reformation, if he had to build on humanistic philosophy, what was to be expected of his pupils? Christians have repeatedly taken recourse to a legalistic conception of scriptural authority, even though they thereby lose the very heart of religion. For intellectually, the belief that the objective Law of God is identical with Divine will is more easily grasped and is more comfortable.

Thus, at the end, the plighted troth of the century lay broken. The bloom of the Middle Ages had wilted. The fervor and profound probing of the Reformation had grown chill and cold. The individualism of the era, proclaiming its yearning and high affinity so jubilantly in the early decades in an Erasmus, a Dürer, a Grünewald, a Luther, grew weary in German lands. In the latter part of the century the still small voice within the feverish soul was hushed, and the sensitivity of the *Volkslied* to the keen stroke of the scythe and the silken rustle of grain was dulled. In Italy the century's mad pursuit of earthly joy and sweet delights died tragically with Bruno. In France Montaigne's temperate *Essays* exhausted all individualism in scepticism and playfulness, and in the end he turned to hierarchical absolutism.

This contending, releasing century, unable to dedicate and appropriate rightly and fully the freedom it had won, enfeebled, prostrate at its close, called again for law and systematized authority. All that which it had unbound, the right to think, to feel, to

believe as an individual, all particulars and parts, the next century, the Age of Restoration, will again bind to a collective system and order. But the immensity of time, appearing so void, so hopeless, was yet full of promise and hope of what was to be. The achievement of the sixteenth century stands imperishable, and communicates a sempiternal regenerative force for the redemption of our modern world.

LUTHER REFERENCES

(References to the works of Luther are abbreviated.)

- Dr. Martin Luther, *Sämmtliche Werke, Deutsche Schriften, Band* 1-67; Frankfurt am Main u. Erlangen; Erste Auflage, 1826-1857: Erl. I.
- Dr. Martin Luther, *Sämmtliche Werke, Band* 1-20; 24-26. Frankfurt am Main u. Erlangen; Zweite Auflage, 1862-1885: Erl. II.
- D. Martini Lutheri opera latina varii argumenti*, vol. 1-7; Erlangen, 1865: Erl. opp. var. arg.
- D. Martini Lutheri exegetica opera latina*, vol. 1-28; Erlangen: Erl. opp. ex.
- Dr. M. Luthers Briefwechsel, bearb. v. E. L. Enders*, Bd. 1-10; Frankfurt a. M. — Calv. 1884-1903: Enders Br.
- D. M. Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesammtausgabe*, Bd. 1ff.; Weimar. 1883 ff.: W.
- Luthers Sämmtliche Schriften, herausg. v. Joh. Georg Walch*, 23 Bde. in 25; St. Louis, 1881-1910: Walch
- D. Martini Lutheri commentarius in epistolam S. Pauli ad Galatas*, vol. 1-3; Erlangen: Erl. ad Gal.
- Ficker, Johannes, *Luthers Vorlesung über den Römerbrief* 1515-1516, 2 Bde.; Leipzig, 1908: Rm.

REFERENCES

CHAPTER I

1. Ps. 46: 10
2. Böcking, Eduard, *Hutteni Opera I*, Leipzig, 1859, p. 217
3. Morgan and Strothmann, *Reading German*, Boston, 1943, p. 67ff.
4. Dilthey, Wilhelm, *Gesammelte Schriften* 2, Leipzig, 1929, p. 309f.
5. Kühlenbeck, L., *Giordano Bruno*, Berlin-Schöneberg, 1913, p. 26
6. *Ibid.*, p. 28
7. *Ibid.*, p. 28
8. *Ibid.*, p. 27
9. *Ibid.*, p. 26
10. *Ibid.*, p. 28f.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 29
12. *Ibid.*, p. 39
13. *Ibid.*, p. 51

CHAPTER II

1. cf. Schöffler, Herbert, *Die Reformation*, Bochum-Langendreer, 1935
2. Böcking, Eduard, *Hutteni Opera IV*, Leipzig, 1860, p. 196
3. *Ibid.*, I, Leipzig, 1859, p. 217
4. Köhler, Walther, *Desiderius Erasmus*, Berlin, 1917, p. 97
5. Walch XVIII, 1601
6. Froude, James Anthony, *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, I, N.Y. 1874, p. 83
7. Walch XVIII, 1667f.
8. *Paracelsus*, hrsg. v. E. Jaekle, Zürich, 1942, p. 14
9. *Paracelsus*, Theophrastus von Hohenheim, *Sämmtliche Werke*, hrsg. v. Karl Sudhoff, Reihe I, 1922ff., Bd. 8, 56
10. *Ibid.*, p. 22
11. *Ibid.*, p. 12
12. *Ibid.*, p. 5
13. Andreas, Willy, *Deutschland vor der Reformation*, 1932, p. 481ff.
14. Phelps, R. H. and Stein, J. M., *The German Heritage*, New York, 1950, p. 39
15. Bezold, Friedrich von, Konrad Celtis, der deutsche Erzhumanist, *Hist.* 2, N. F. XIII, p. 128; Peuckert, Will-Erich, *Die grosse Wende*, Hamburg, 1948, p. 439
16. Theophrast von Hohenheim, *Sämmtliche Werke*, hrsg. von Karl Sudhoff, Reihe I, 1922ff. Bd. 12, 58f.

17. *Ibid.*, Bd. 13, 152f.
18. *Ibid.*, Bd. 11, 169
19. Peuckert, Will-Erich, *Die grosse Wende*, Hamburg, 1948, p. 452ff.; *The Century Dictionary and Cyclopaedia*, IX, New York, 1900, p. 278
20. Peuckert, Will-Erich, *Die grosse Wende*, Hamburg, 1948, p. 467
21. Prov. 3: 5-6

CHAPTER III

1. Mark 14: 18, 19
2. Gen. 1: 26
3. Burkhard, Werner, *Schriftstücke deutscher Sprache*, 2^{te} Auflage, Aarau, Vol. 1, 320
4. Mark 14: 36; Luke 22: 42
5. John 3: 16
6. John 19: 30
7. Colvin, Sydney, "Dürer," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition, Cambridge, 1910, Vol. VIII, 697ff.
8. cf. 3
9. Bruns, Friedrich, *Die Lese der deutschen Lyrik*, New York, 1938, p. 409
10. Luke 18: 17; Mark 10: 15
11. Isa. 11: 9, 6
12. Burkhard, Werner, *Ibid.*, p. 318
13. Goethe, J. W., *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, ed. by Ernst Feise, New York, 1914, p. 6
14. Eph. 6: 11-15
15. Phil. 4: 13
16. Luke 1: 37
17. Mark 9: 23; John 1: 12
18. Matt. 14: 31
19. John 6: 68
20. I John 4: 12
21. Exod. 3: 5
22. John 3: 30
23. John 19: 5
24. II Sam. 7: 19
25. Luke 1: 35
26. John 1: 14
27. John 8: 12
28. I Cor. 15: 55
29. Eph. 1: 23
30. John 17: 1, 5

CHAPTER IV

1. Erl. I: 26, 126; W. 54, 219
2. Erl. I: 65, 78; 24, 339; W. 30 II, 284

3. Erl. I: 24, 339; W. 30 II, 284
4. Walch xviii, 70ff.
5. Enders Br. 1, 219, 31; 2, 310, 81
6. Erl. opp. var. arg. 6, 21
7. W. 1, 99
8. W. 1, 77f.
9. W. 3, 372; 3, 124
10. W. 1, 215
11. Erl. I: 50, 292; W. 28, 248
12. Erl. I: 31, 339; 31, 90; W. 12, 221
13. Erl. I: 53, 274; W. 15, 394
14. Erl. I: 24, 10; W. 6, 480
15. Erl. I: 24, 10, 11; W. 6, 480f.
16. Erl. I: 31, 257; W. 38, 119
17. Erl. ad Gal. 3, 134f.
18. Erl. I: 24, 329ff.; 369, 370; W. 30 II, 340, 341
19. Erl. I: 30, 387f.; W. 26, 570, 571
20. Erl. I: 30, 406; W. 26, 586
21. Erl. I: 31, 308; W. 38, 195
22. Erl. I: 59, 297; W. Ti., 1, 462
23. Erl. I: 54, 213; W. Br. 6, 29
24. Erl. opp. var. arg. 1, 22f.
25. Rm. II, 109
26. Seidemann, J. K. M. Anton Lauterbachs Tagebuch auf das Jahr 1536
Dresden, 1872: p. 81 note 130
27. Erl. I: 21, 274ff.; W. 6, 404ff.
28. Erl. I: 21, 279; W. 6, 405f.
29. Erl. I: 21, 288; W. 6, 412 —
30. Erl. I: 49, 347; W. 45, 702 —
31. Erl. I: 28, 34; W. 8, 486
32. Erl. I: 28, 35; W. 8, 487
33. Erl. I: 28, 79; W. 8, 518
34. Erl. I: 31, 349f.; W. 12, 237
35. Erl. I: 36, 15; W. 16, 406
36. Erl. I: 21, 36; W. 30 I, 134
37. Erl. I: 29, 23f.; W. 12, 237
38. W. 6, 484ff.
39. Erl. I: 27, 176; W. 7, 21
40. Erl. I: 27, 176; W. 7, 21
41. Erl. I: 27, 180; W. 7, 24
42. Erl. I: 27, 180f.; W. 7, 24
43. Erl. I: 27, 196; W. 7, 35
44. Erl. I: 27, 196; W. 7, 35f.
45. Erl. I: 27, 199; W. 7, 37
46. Erl. I: 27, 196; W. 7, 38
47. Erl. I: 27, 196; W. 7, 35

48. Erl. I: 27, 177; W. 7, 21
49. Erl. I: 27, 181; W. 7, 24
50. Erl. I: 27, 196; W. 7, 35
51. Erl. I: 27, 390; W. 8, 275
52. Erl. I: 24, 26; W. 6, 591
53. Enders Br. 1, 218, 15
54. Erl. I: 61, 116; W. Ti. 3, 318
55. Erl. opp. var. arg. 6, 391
56. Erl. I: 64, 382; W. 7, 814ff.
57. Walther, Wilhelm, *Für Luther wider Rom*, Halle a.d.S. 1906: p. 481f.
58. Enders Br. 2, 409
59. Walther, Wilhelm, *Für Luther wider Rom*, Halle a.d.S. 1906: 480f.
60. Enders Br. 3, 73; Walch xv, 2506
61. Walch xv, 1846; Erl. I: 21, 9
62. Enders Br. 3, 73
63. Erl. I: 63, 328; W. 38, 133f.
64. Erl. I: 21, 9; W. 30 I, 351
65. Erl. I: 21, 36; W. 30 I, 134
66. *Kirchengesangbuch*, St. Louis, 1903; p. 93, 158; Erl. I: 56, 343f.
67. Erl. I: 28, 212; W. 10 III, 8
68. Erl. I: 28, 380; W. 10, II, 257
69. Erl. I: 28, 368; W. 10 II, 247
70. Erl. I: 29, 265f.; W. 18, 186
71. Erl. I: 29, 336; W. 19, 490
72. Erl. I: 28, 379; W. 10 II, 256
73. Erl. I: 28, 287; W. 10 II, 11f.
74. Erl. I: 28, 219; W. 10 III, 18f.
75. Erl. I: 28, 220; W. 10 III, 19
76. Erl. I: 28, 228; W. 10 III, 29
77. Erl. I: 28, 230; W. 10 III, 33
78. Erl. I: 28, 230f.; W. 10 III, 34
79. Erl. I: 28, 250; W. 10 III, 63
80. Erl. I: 28, 260
81. Erl. I: 36, 52, 54; W. 16, 443, 445
82. Erl. opp. var. arg. 2, 79ff.
83. Erl. I: 28, 317; W. 10 II, 40
84. Erl. I: 28, 317; W. 10 II, 41
85. Erl. I: 28, 313; W. 10 II, 37
86. Erl. I: 22, 49f.; W. 8, 680, 681
87. Erl. I: 28, 149; W. 10 II, 111
88. Erl. I: 22, 49; W. 8, 680
89. Erl. I: 28, 178f.; W. 10 II, 140
90. Erl. I: 22, 52ff.; W. 8, 682, 683
91. Erl. I: 22, 53f.; W. 8, 683
92. Erl. I: 65, 15; W. 18, 369
93. Erl. I: 24, 264, 265; W. 18, 299

94. Erl. I: 24, 259; W. 18, 291
95. Erl. I: 24, 263f.; W. 18, 298f.
96. Erl. I: 24, 270, 271, 274; W. 18, 309, 310, 315
97. Erl. I: 24, 276; W. 18, 318f.
98. Erl. I: 24, 291; W. 18, 359
99. Erl. I: 27, 192; W. 7, 33
100. Erl. I: 24, 283; W. 18, 329
101. Erl. I: 24, 286; W. 18, 333f.
102. Bucholtz, Franz Bernard v., *Geschichte der Regierung Ferdinand des Ersten*, Wien, 1831: 2, 196ff.
103. Erl. I: 51, 417; W. 12, 333
104. Erl. I: 2, 179f.
105. Erl. I: 53, 254; W. 15, 239
106. Erl. I: 53, 268; W. 15, 221
107. Erl. I: 53, 304; W. Br. 3, 508
108. Erl. I: 53, 325; W. Br. 3, 547f.
109. Erl. I: 24, 288f.; W. 18, 357
110. Erl. I: 24, 307; W. 18, 392
111. Erl. I: 24, 314; W. 18, 397
112. Erl. I: 25, 7; W. 30 III, 279
113. Erl. I: 53, 293f.; W. Br. 3, 481
114. Erl. I: 43, 151
115. Erl. I: 43, 141f.
116. Erl. I: 43, 154f.
117. Erl. I: 24, 289f.; W. 18, 357f.
118. Erl. I: 24, 294; W. 18, 361
119. Erl. I: 65, 22; W. 18, 374
120. Erl. I: 24, 317f.; W. 18, 400
121. Erl. I: 24, 296f.; W. 18, 385
122. Walther, Wilhelm, *Für Luther wider Rom*, Halle a.d.S., 1906: p. 401
123. Erl. II: 26, 2
124. Erl. I: 36, 121; W. 16, 505f.
125. Erl. I: 24, 286; W. 18, 333
126. Erl. I: 53, 306; W. Br. 3, 515
127. Walch xvi, 181of.
128. Erl. I: 24, 266; W. 18, 303
129. Erl. I: 54, 130; W. Br. 5, 239
130. Erl. I: 25, 29f.; W. 30 III, 298f.
131. Erl. I: 25, 50; W. 30 III, 320
132. Erl. I: 54, 141; W. Br. 5, 260
133. Erl. I: 25, 24f.; W. 303, 391; W. 30 III, 291
134. Erl. I: 22, 270; W. 19, 645
135. Walch xvi, 277
136. Erl. I: 26, 256; W. 26, 145f.
137. Erl. I: 21, 341; W. 6, 455
138. Erl. I: 2, 74, 75

139. Erl. I: 2, 73
140. Erl. I: 2, 76
141. Erl. I: 25, 6; W. 30 III, 278
142. Walch xvi, 285
143. Walch xvi, 288f.
144. Erl. I: 53, 331; W. Br. 3, 595
145. Erl. I: 53, 255ff.; W. 15, 210ff.
146. Erl. I: 53, 263f.; W. 15, 217
147. Erl. I: 53, 266; W. 15, 219
148. Erl. I: 28, 19
149. Erl. I: 25, 83
150. Erl. I: 54, 298
151. Erl. I: 62, 89, 90; W. Ti. 4, 36, 165
152. Enders Br. 2, 3f.
153. Erl. I: 58, 376; 54, 145
154. Erl. I: 61, 378-397; 59, 40ff.; 57, 30
155. Kirchengesangbuch, St. Louis, 1903: p. 93, 158; Erl. I: 54, 343f.
156. Erl. I: 62, 97
157. Erl. I: 22, 88f.; W. 11, 267
158. Erl. I: 53, 369; W. Br. 4, 29
159. Enders Br. 5, 271f.
160. Erl. I: 54, 181
161. Erl. I: 64, 267f.
162. Erl. I: 53, 265; W. 15, 219
163. Erl. I: 53, 368; W. Br. 4, 28
164. Erl. I: 54, 141; W. Br. 5, 259f.
165. Erl. I: 54, 161f.; W. 30 II, 400ff.
166. Erl. I: 54, 266; W. Br. 6, 74
167. Erl. I: 53, 338f.; W. Br. 3, 642
168. Erl. I: 25, 108; W. 30 III, 470
169. Erl. I: 25, 108; 43, 126f.; W. 30 III, 470
170. Walch xv, 2391
171. Erl. I: 53, 388; W. Br. 4, 134
172. Erl. I: 30, 5f.; W. 23, 29
173. Erl. I: 53, 340; W. Br. 3, 642f.
174. Erl. I: 53, 341; W. Br. 3, 643
175. Erl. I: 31, 235; W. 38, 102
176. Erl. I: 31, 248; W. 38, 111f.
177. Enders Br. 2, 329
178. Erl. I: 53, 149; W. Br. 2, 594
179. Erl. I: 50, 208; W. 28, 131
180. Erl. I: 53, 162; W. Br. 3, 27f.
181. Erl. I: 25, 26; W. 30 III, 291f., 293
182. Erl. I: 26, 131; W. 54, 224
183. Erl. I: 43, 148
184. Enders Br. 2, 329f.

185. Erl. I: 27, 210; W. 7, 274f.
186. Erl. I: 53, 149f.; W. Br. 2, 594
187. Erl. opp. var. arg. 4, 44
188. Walch xviii, 1601
189. Walther, Wilhelm, *Für Luther wider Rom*, Halle a.d.S., 1906: p. 621
190. Enders Br. 1, 171; 2, 13
191. Enders Br. 1, 126
192. Erl. I: 30, 5; W. 23, 29
193. Enders Br. 1, 8
194. W. 36, 435
195. W. Br. 5, 639
196. W. Br. 3, 44
197. Erl. I: 55, 71f.; W. Br. 7, 124f.
198. W. Br. 1, 289
199. W. Br. 2, 135
200. W. 6, 104ff.
201. W. Br. 5, 324ff.
202. W. 30 II, 640
203. W. 8, 685
204. Erl. I: 59, 297; W. Ti. 1, 462
205. Erl. I: 60, 46, 82; W. Ti. 1, 66, 458
206. Erl. I: 28, 29; W. 8, 482f.
207. Erl. I: 62, 16; W. Ti. 6, 305
208. Erl. I: 50, 74; W. 46, 53
209. Erl. I: 1, 293
210. Erl. I: 32, 8; W. 50, 473
211. Erl. I: 59, 242; W. Ti. 2, 178
212. Erl. I: 25, 47f.; W. 30 III, 317
213. Erl. I: 63, 272; W. 26, 530
214. Erl. I: 60, 81; W. Ti. 1, 289
215. Erl. I: 32, 9; W. 50, 474
216. Erl. I: 62, 443; W. Ti. 1, 43
217. Erl. I: 36, 404; W. 28, 755
218. Erl. I: 36, 411; W. 28, 763
219. Erl. II: 1, 14f.
220. Erl. II: 6, 179, 123
221. Erl. I: 50, 377; W. 28, 371
222. Erl. I: 50, 377; W. 28, 371
223. Erl. I: 54, 148; W. Br. 5, 325f.
224. Erl. I: 27, 217, 219; W. 7, 280, 281
225. Erl. I: 25, 47f.; W. 30 III, 317
226. Erl. I: 39, 29; W. 45, 225
227. Erl. I: 39, 99f.; W. 51, 291f.
228. Erl. I: 57, 209; 58, 385; 59, 64
229. Erl. I: 62, 122; W. Ti. 2, 66
230. Erl. I: 60, 108; W. Ti. 2, 63

- 231. Erl. opp. ex. 15, 262
- 232. Erl. opp. ex. 23, 143, 284
- 233. Erl. I: 32, 261f.; W. 53, 543, 544
- 234. W. 42, 344
- 235. W. 2, 186ff.; 227ff., 236ff.
- 236. W. 6, 446
- 237. W. 6, 469
- 238. W. 11, 254, 260, 263ff., 266, 277
- 239. Erl. I: 55, 257f.; W. Br. 8, 277
- 240. Erl. I: 30, 372; W. 26, 509
- 241. Erl. I: 56, 30; W. Br. 10, 86
- 242. Erl. I: 56, 53; W. Br. 10, 266
- 243. Erl. II: 25, 399
- 244. Erl. I: 31, 437; W. 50, 327f.
- 245. Erl. I: 40, 301f.; W. 30 I, 238
- 246. W. 2, 239
- 247. Erl. II: 7, 330
- 248. Ammundsen, V., *Kirke-Leksikon for Norden*, Copenhagen, 1911
- 249. Erl. I: 27, 361; W. 8, 172
- 250. Erl. I: 63, 321; W. 38, 79
- 251. W. 42, 244, 300, 527; 4, 191
- 252. W. 42, 507
- 253. W. 42, 527
- 254. W. 11, 273; W. 19, 648; W. 11, 275f.
- 255. Erl. II: 17, 392, 401f.
- 256. Erl. I: 43, 127f.
- 257. Erl. I: 56, 20f.; W. Br. 10, 36
- 258. W. 28, 295
- 259. W. 6, 265
- 260. W. 11, 277
- 261. Erl. I: 23, 54; W. 26, 229
- 262. Erl. I: 63, 136; W. Bi. 7, 25
- 263. Erl. I: 44, 79f.; W. 47, 280
- 264. Erl. I: 51, 417; W. 12, 333
- 265. Erl. I: 51, 419; W. 12, 335
- 266. Erl. I: 27, 336; W. 8, 151
- 267. Erl. I: 63, 13f.; W. Bi. 8, 19
- 268. Erl. I: 22, 59-105; 85, 88; W. 11, 264, 266
- 269. Erl. I: 22, 72; W. 11, 254
- 270. Erl. I: 22, 81; W. 11, 261
- 271. Erl. I: 62, 197ff.; W. Ti., 4, 235ff.
- 272. W. 8, 679
- 273. W. 18, 319ff.
- 274. Erl. I: 21, 285, 296; W. 6, 410, 419
- 275. Erl. I: 21, 346; W. 6, 458
- 276. Erl. I: 21, 60; W. 30 I, 153

277. *Concordia Triglotta*, St. Louis, 1921: p. 623f.
278. Erl. I: 36, 121; W. 16, 505f.
279. Erl. I: 39, 334; W. 51, 244
280. Erl. I: 61, 319; W. Ti. 5, 225f.
281. Erl. I: 43, 211f.
282. Erl. II: 1, 33
283. Erl. I: 13, 23
284. W. 18, 389f.; W. 19, 629f.
285. W. 11, 255
286. Erl. I: 22, 66f.; W. 11, 249f.
287. Erl. I: 22, 66; W. 11, 259
288. Erl. I: 18, 270; W. 34 I, 52
289. Köstlin, Julius, *Luther's Theologie*, Stuttgart, 1901; II, 308
290. Enders Br. 5, 77
291. Enders Br. 5, 77
292. Enders Br. 5, 248f.
293. Erl. I: 61, 265; W. Ti. 6, 275
294. Erl. I: 53, 313; W. Br. 3, 522
295. Erl. I: 53, 314; W. Br. 3, 531
296. Erl. I: 61, 191; W. Ti. 4, 183
297. Erl. I: 51, 69; W. 12, 141
298. W. 8, 630ff.; W. 24, 501ff.; W. 12, 125; W. 8, 628; W. 15, 87; W. 8, 605ff., 633ff., 656, 581ff.
299. Erl. I: 51, 433; W. 12, 346f.
300. Erl. I: 34, 143; W. 24, 520
301. Enders Br. 5, 279
302. Erl. I: 61, 235; 29, 65; 51, 39; 23, 39
303. Erl. I: 20, 65; W. 10 II, 283
304. Erl. I: 51, 39f.; W. 12, 120
305. Erl. I: 51, 41; W. 12, 122
306. Erl. I: 20, 57ff.; W. 10 II, 267ff.
307. Erl. I: 61, 169; W. Ti. 2, 497
308. Erl. I: 61, 192; W. Ti. 6, 262
309. Erl. I: 61, 193; W. Ti. 4, 532
310. Erl. I: 20, 57ff.; W. 10 II, 301
311. Erl. I: 61, 193; W. Ti. 4, 543
312. Erl. I: 61, 209; W. Ti. 5, 43
313. Erl. I: 61, 184; W. Ti. 4, 504
314. Erl. I: 51, 21; W. 12, 107
315. Erl. I: 61, 184; W. Ti. 4, 504
316. Erl. I: 61, 193; W. Ti. 4, 532
317. Erl. I: 61, 258; W. Ti. 3, 380
318. Erl. I: 61, 270; W. Ti. 1, 105
319. Erl. II: 16, 63
320. W. Br. 3, 541, 8
321. W. Br. 4; 109, 7

322. W. Br. 5; 377f. (Philip and Justus are the sons of Melanchthon and Justus Jonas)
323. Erl. I: 61, 169, 258, 270; W. Ti. 2, 497; 3, 380; 1, 105
324. Erl. II: 1, 162f.; II: 18, 56
325. Erl. I: 45, 253; W. 7, 575
326. Erl. I: 43, 358
327. Erl. I: 20, 193ff.; W. 6, 196ff.
328. Erl. I: 20, 200; W. 6, 207
329. Erl. I: 20, 198; W. 6, 206
330. Luke X, 27

CHAPTER V

1. W. 23, 183
2. W. 19, 492
3. W. 23, 189
4. W. 18, 202
5. W. 18, 203
6. W. 23, 85
7. W. 23, 150
8. W. 23, 189
9. W. 23, 193, 261
10. W. 20, 387; W. 24, 254
11. Erl. I: 63, 156f.; 51, 326; 37, 389; W. Bi. 7, 384; 12, 259f.; 18, 501
12. Erl. I: 25, 263; W. 50, 548
13. Erl. I: 46, 174; W. 46, 726f.
14. W. 18, 685
15. Erl. I: 58, 108; W. Ti. 6, 83
16. Erl. I: 2, 122; W. 52, 165
17. Erl. I: 40, 260; W. 19, 317
18. W. Ti. 1, 183
19. Erl. I: 28, 298; W. 10 II, 23
20. Erl. I: 28, 340, 298; W. 10 II, 90
21. Erl. opp. var. arg. 7, 176f.
22. Erl. I: 46, 222, 224, 229; W. 46, 767, 768, 770
23. Erl. I: 35, 23, 25, 27; W. 16, 68, 70, 71
24. Erl. I: 63, 169; W. Bi. 7, 404
25. Erl. I: 63, 159; W. Bi. 7, 409
26. Erl. I: 63, 156f.; W. Bi. 7, 385f.
27. Erl. I: 36, 4, 5; W. 16, 396
28. Erl. I: 63, 57
29. Erl. II: 9, 246
30. Erl. I: 57, 226f.; W. Ti. 1, 122
31. Erl. I: 63, 28ff.
32. Erl. I: 62, 146
33. Erl. I: 62, 133f.

34. Erl. I: 63, 92
35. W. 16, 426, 34
36. Erl. I: 63, 112f.; W. Bi. 6, 8
37. Erl. I: 63, 114f.
38. Erl. I: 62, 136f.; W. Ti. 2, 654
39. Erl. I: 63, 109; 51, 326; W. Bi. 6, 2; 12, 259
40. Erl. I: 51, 327; W. 12, 260
41. Opp. var. arg. 6, 444f.
42. cf. Otto, Rudolf, *Das Heilige*, 1917
43. Walch XVIII, 150
44. Erl. I: 45, 366; W. 46, 587
45. Erl. I: 45, 327; W. 46, 562
46. Erl. I: 58, 366; W. Ti. 3, 106
47. Erl. I: 36, 290, 210f., 339, 231, 237; 47, 145; W. 28, 638, 557f., 686f., 578, 584
48. Erl. I: 36, 231, 237; W. 28, 578, 584
49. Erl. I: 36, 212; W. 28, 559, 560
50. Erl. I: 50, 200; W. 28, 120f.
51. W. 42, 296
52. Erl. I: 58, 144; W. Ti. 1, 114
53. Erl. I: 58, 148; W. Ti. 6, 94
54. Erl. I: 52, 298
55. Erl. I: 52, 320
56. Erl. I: 57, 162; W. Ti. 6, 26
57. Erl. I: 57, 278; W. Ti. 1, 192
58. Erl. I: 57, 109, 232; W. Ti. 2, 366; 4, 198
59. Erl. I: 9, 2ff.; 46, 36, 82f.
60. W. 44, 129
61. Rm. II, 20, 5; 185, 2; 27, 14
62. Walch XVIII, 1963
63. Erl. I: 4, 134f.; II: 5, 236; 2, 333, 335
64. W. 18, 489
65. Goethe, W. v. *Faust*, Leipzig, Im Inselverlag: p. 317
66. Erl. II: 11, 194
67. Seeberg, R., *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* IV, 14, 1933, 152f., 214, 217
68. Erl. I: 21, 38; W. 30 I, 136
69. Erl. I: 27, 181f.; W. 7, 24, 25
70. Erl. I: 56, 343f.
71. Isa. 45: 15; W. 1, 362
72. W. 43, 463
73. Erl. I: 30, 363; W. 26, 500
74. Erl. I: 6, 230
75. Erl. I: 9, 25; II: 5, 236; 2, 333, 335; W. 41, 272f.
76. *Concordia Triglotta*, St. Louis, 1921, p. 43
77. Erl. I: 6, 231
78. *Triglotta*, p. 33, 461
79. Erl. I: 57, 386; W. Ti. 1, 396

80. Erl. I: 37, 13, 42; W. 54, 35f., 56f.
81. Erl. I: 57, 109
82. Erl. I: 9, 31f.; W. 41, 276f.
83. *Triglotta*, p. 543, 2; 545, 4, 6
84. Erl. I: 33, 33f.; W. 24, 29
85. Erl. I: 33, 35f.; W. 24, 30, 31
86. W. 26, 339
87. Erl. I: 30, 58; W. 23, 133
88. Erl. I: 30, 56-66; W. 23, 130-145
89. W. 23, 133, 135
90. Erl. I: 30, 61; W. 23, 137f.
91. Erl. I: 45, 300f.; W. 46, 545
92. Erl. II: 18, 313
93. Erl. I: 9, 19; W. 21, 521
94. Erl. I: 52, 337
95. Erl. I: 57, 114; W. Ti. 1, 101
96. Erl. I: 30, 58, 62; W. 23, 135
97. Erl. I: 30, 58f.; W. 23, 135, 137
98. Erl. I: 45, 252; W. 7, 574
99. Erl. I: 30, 60; W. 23, 137
100. Erl. I: 30, 221f.; W. 26, 339
101. Erl. I: 57, 386; W. Ti. 1, 396
102. Erl. I: 61, 110f.; W. Ti. 1, 574
103. W. 42, 58
104. Erl. I: 33, 42; W. 24, 37f.
105. Erl. II: 11, 115
106. Erl. I: 30, 63; W. 23, 141
107. Erl. I: 30, 63f.; W. 23, 141
108. cf. *Triglotta* 1014ff.
109. Erl. I: 49, 137f.; W. 45, 557
110. Erl. I: 58, 35f.; W. Ti. 6, 67f.
111. *Triglotta* 1029, 40, 41; W. 26, 319, 321
112. *Ibid.*, 1028, 43
113. *Ibid.*, 1029, 44f.
114. W. 23, 133
115. W. 23, 143
116. W. 23, 145
117. W. 40 I, 360, 20
118. W. 23, 139
119. Erl. I: 49, 181; W. 45, 587
120. Erl. I: 50, 179; W. 28, 97f.
121. Matt. 5: 48
122. Lev. 19: 2
123. Ps. 14: 3
124. Luther, *Auslegung des kleinen Katechismus*, St. Louis, 1905, p. 44
125. Matt. 22, 37, 39

126. Titus 1: 16
127. Luke 18: 19
128. W. 26, 37
129. Erl. I: 39, 48
130. W. 5, 602ff.
131. Luther, *Auslegung des kleinen Katechismus*, St. Louis, 1905, p. 92
132. W. 10 I, 2, 29
133. W. 10 III, 154, 14
134. W. 19, 488
135. W. 19, 489
136. Erl. I: 30, 66; W. 23, 145f.
137. Erl. I: 29, 338; W. 19, 493
138. Erl. I: 30, 132f.; W. 23, 254
139. Erl. I: 49, 187; W. 45, 591
140. Luther, *Auslegung des kleinen Katechismus*, St. Louis, 1905, p. 97
141. *Triglotta* 687, 34
142. Erl. I: 21, 192; W. 2, 103f.
143. Luther, *Auslegung des kleinen Katechismus*, St. Louis, 1905, p. 68ff.
144. Erl. I: 21, 193; W. 2, 104
145. Erl. I: 60, 1; W. Ti. 2, 10
146. Erl. I: 60, 5; W. Ti. 1, 463
147. Erl. I: 60, 14; W. Ti. 4, 489
148. Erl. I: 63, 367; W. 51, 575
149. Erl. I: 60, 5; W. Ti. 1, 463
150. Erl. I: 49, 256f.; W. 45, 640
151. Erl. I: 49, 274; W. 45, 652
152. Walch xviii, 1768
153. Walch xviii, 1612
154. Walch xviii, 1666
155. Erl. I: 23, 49f.; W. 26, 226
156. Erl. I: 58, 214; W. Ti. 3, 541
157. Erl. I: 58, 222; W. Ti. 6, 119
158. Erl. I: 58, 238; W. Ti. 1, 109
159. W. 18, 783
160. Erl. I: 58, 235f.; W. Ti. 6, 125f.
161. Erl. I: 58, 226; W. Ti. 6, 120
162. Erl. I: 58, 227; W. Ti. 6, 121
163. Erl. I: 58, 224; W. Ti. 5, 2
164. Walch XVIII, 1689
165. W. 18, 686, 689, 712, 731, 784
166. Erl. I: 35, 382; W. 16, 354
167. Walch XVIII, 1715
168. Walch XVIII, 1718f.
169. Walch XVIII, 1720
170. Walch XVIII, 1849f.
171. Walch XVIII, 1867f.; W. 18, 729

172. Walch XVIII, 1909
173. Walch XVIII, 1963
174. Erl. I: 47, 357; W. 33, 149f.
175. Erl. I: 40, 236; W. 31 I, 424
176. Erl. I: 58, 274; W. Ti. 6, 130
177. Erl. I: 46, 85f.; W. 46, 668
178. Erl. I: 46, 83f.; W. 46, 667
179. Erl. I: 31, 441; W. 50, 331
180. Erl. I: 36, 56; W. 16, 447
181. Erl. I: 36, 74; W. 16, 462
182. Erl. I: 36, 40; W. 16, 431
183. Erl. I: 31, 441; W. 50, 331
184. Erl. I: 31, 440f.; W. 50, 330
185. Erl. I: 27, 192; W. 7, 33
186. Erl. I: 27, 401; W. 8, 285
187. Erl. I: 50, 170; W. 28, 86
188. Erl. I: 27, 265; W. 7, 655
189. Erl. I: 27, 270f.; W. 7, 658f.
190. Erl. I: 27, 176; W. 7, 21
191. Erl. I: 27, 264, 271; W. 7, 654, 659
192. Erl. I: 63, 122; W. Bi. 7, 6
193. Erl. I: 52, 340
194. Erl. I: 63, 119ff.; W. Bi. 7, 3f.
195. Luther, *Auslegung des kleinen Katechismus*, St. Louis, 1905: p. 43
196. Erl. I: 44, 187; W. 47, 347
197. Erl. II: 14, 153f.
198. Erl. I: 21, 192; W. 2, 103f.
199. W. 40, 1, 235
200. W. 3, 389
201. Erl. I: 14, 117; W. 22, 284f.
202. W. 19, 225
203. Erl. I: 63, 123; W. Bi. 7, 8
204. Erl. I: 60, 65; W. Ti. 1, 505
205. Luther, *Auslegung des kleinen Katechismus*, St. Louis, 1905: p. 95ff.
206. Erl. II: 8, 318
207. Erl. I: 28, 108; W. 8, 539
208. Erl. I: 63, 125f.; W. Bi. 7, 12
209. Erl. I: 27, 199; W. 7, 38
210. Erl. I: 48, 388; W. 33, 662
211. Erl. I: 24, 73; W. 7, 336
212. Erl. I: 11, 293; W. 21, 262
213. Luther, *M. Select Works*, Mr. Henry Cole, Grand Rapids, 1931, p. 397
214. W. 49, 111
215. W. 7, 215
216. W. 2, 60
217. W. 6, 163

218. Erl. II: 19, 135f.
219. Erl. II: 19, 166
220. Rm. II, 144; W. 2, 101
221. W. 40, 1, 233
222. Erl. I: 59, 328
223. Erl. I: 59, 336f.
224. Erl. I: 38, 143ff.; W. 31 I, 318f.
225. Erl. I: 36, 94; Erl. 16, 480
226. Rm. II, 218
227. Walch XVIII, 73
228. Erl. I: 21, 241f.; W. 2, 735f.
229. Erl. I: 35, 65; W. 16, 39
230. Erl. I: 34, 261f.; W. 24, 622f.
231. Erl. I: 41, 76; W. 31 I, 171
232. W. 1, 362
233. Rm. I, 93
234. Rm. II, 203
235. W. 2, 574
236. W. 14, 242f.; Erl. I: 33, 309
237. Rm. II, 116
238. W. 1, 162f.
239. Rm. II, 48
240. Rm. II, 137
241. Rm. II, 196
242. Rm. II, 225
243. Rm. II, 222, 193
244. Erl. I: 50, 124ff.; W. 46, 89
245. Erl. I: 31, 345f.; W. 38, 226f.
246. Erl. I: 61, 159f.; 37, 359; W. Ti. 3, 488; W. 18, 486
247. Rm. II, 217
248. Erl. I: 31, 400
249. W. 18, 694
250. Erl. I: 37, 396; W. 18, 504f.
251. W. 10 I, 2
252. Erl. II: 10, 22
253. W. 40 I, 33, 7
254. Erl. I: 48, 5f.; W. 33, 197f.
255. Erl. I: 27, 184; W. 7, 27
256. Erl. I: 28, 4; W. 42, 388
257. W. 40, 1, 283
258. W. 17 I, 187
259. Erl. II: 14, 237; II: 15, 543
260. Erl. I: 50, 436
261. Erl. I: 51, 19; W. 12, 106
262. Erl. I: 63, 125; W. Bi. 7, 10
263. W. 42, 442

264. Erl. I: 51, 361; W. 12, 287
265. W. 42, 452
266. Erl. I: 27, 189; W. 7, 30
267. Erl. II: 16, 131; I: 20, 203
268. Erl. I: 51, 365; W. 12, 290
269. Erl. I: 51, 472; W. 12, 380
270. Erl. I: 27, 186; W. 7, 28
271. Erl. I: 27, 192; W. 7, 32
272. Erl. I: 27, 196; W. 7, 36
273. Erl. I: 27, 190, 196; W. 7, 31
274. Erl. I: 45, 406; W. 46, 613
275. Erl. II: 8, 60
276. Erl. I: 52, 216, 219; W. 14, 16, 19
277. Erl. I: 2, 189
278. W. Ti. 2, 347
279. Erl. I: 27, 187f.; W. 7, 29
280. Erl. II: 9, 283
281. Erl. I: 11, 110; W. 17 II, 192
282. Erl. I: 38, 248f.
283. Erl. I: 43, 178
284. Erl. I: 56, 297
285. Erl. I: 40, 295f.; W. 31 I, 234
286. Erl. I: 40, 215; W. 31 I, 409
287. Erl. I: 43, 14f.
288. Erl. I: 54, 47; 34, 46, 47
289. Erl. I: 34, 48
290. Erl. I: 34, 314
291. Erl. I: 34, 250f.
292. *Lutheri Operationes in psalmos*, 15, 267
293. Erl. I: 56, 296f.
294. Rm. II, 287, 20
295. Erl. I: 61, 406; W. Ti. 5, 445; 1, 343
296. Erl. I: 60, 15, 2, 85; W. Ti. 4, 26; 6, 212; 1, 406
297. Erl. I: 61, 414; W. Ti. 4, 26
298. Erl. I: 58, 93; W. Ti. 2, 229
299. Erl. II: 14, 6
300. Erl. II: 17, 257
301. Erl. II: 14, 77
302. Erl. I: 59, 31; I: 50, 108; W. 46, 77; W. Ti. 5, 107
303. Erl. I: 40, 209; W. 31 I, 404
304. Erl. I: 2, 148; W. 52, 181
305. Erl. I: 21, 110; W. 30 I, 196
306. Erl. I: 52, 335
307. Erl. opp. var. arg. 1, 179
308. Erl. I: 23, 223; W. 38, 364
309. Erl. I: 21, 227; W. 2, 105

310. Erl. I: 20, 233; W. 6, 232
311. Erl. I: 59, 1; W. Ti. 1, 443
312. Erl. I: 59, 6; W. Ti. 4, 568
313. Erl. I: 59, 19; W. Ti. 1, 604
314. Erl. I: 20, 233; I: 24, 60; I: 21, 128; W. 6, 232
315. Erl. I: 50, 119; W. 46, 85
316. Erl. I: 38, 405; W. 19, 578
317. Erl. II: 14, 117
318. Erl. I: 43, 179
319. Erl. I: 43, 178
320. W. 43, 399
321. Erl. II: 14, 52
322. Erl. I: 20, 227; W. 6, 227f.
323. Erl. I: 27, 178; W. 7, 22
324. Erl. I: 27, 185; W. 7, 28
325. Erl. I: 52, 373f.
326. Erl. I: 52, 370
327. Erl. I: 25, 359; I: 50, 221; W. 50, 629
328. Erl. I: 44, 161; W. 47, 331
329. Erl. I: 64, 382
330. Erl. I: 62, 119; W. Ti. 1, 140
331. Eckermann, Joh. Peter, *Gespräche mit Goethe*, Reclam, Leipzig, vol. III, 161
332. *Ibid.*, 264
333. Erl. I: 27, 186; W. 7, 28
334. Erl. I: 30, 58; W. 23, 133f.
335. Erl. I: 21, 36; W. 30 I, 134
336. Erl. I: 47, 251; W. 33, 29
337. Dittrich, Ottmar, *Geschichte der Ethik*, Leipzig, 1932: IV, 98
338. Erl. I: 55, 75
339. Dittrich, Ottmar, *Geschichte der Ethik*, Leipzig, 1932: IV, 165
340. *Ibid.*, IV, 167
341. *Ibid.*, IV, 166
342. Calvin, John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Trans. by John Allen, Philadelphia, 1936; II, 170-241
343. *Ibid.*, II, 212
344. Erl. I: 55, 161f.
345. Calvin, John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Trans. by John Allen, Philadelphia, 1936: II, 203
346. Dittrich, Ottmar, *Geschichte der Ethik*, Leipzig, 1932: IV, 194
347. *Ibid.*, IV, 189
348. *Ibid.*, IV, 212
349. *Ibid.*, IV, 214
350. *Ibid.*, IV, 217
351. Erl. I: 61, 419; W. Ti. 4, 125
352. Goethe, J. W., *Goß von Berlichingen*, N. Y. 1896, p. 132

1 1012 01223 6321

[illegible]

GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

